



Report of the Chief Planning Officer

CITY PLANS PANEL

Date: 7th JULY 2016

Subject: PREAPP/16/00272 – Proposal for 215 Apartments, with ancillary ground floor commercial uses, located within a 16 storey block, at Land At Corner Of Whitehall Road And Springwell Road, Holbeck, Leeds, LS12 1AW

Applicant: Citylife

Electoral Wards Affected:

Beeston and Holbeck

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 Plans Panel for information. The developer's representatives will be asked to present the emerging scheme to allow Members to consider and comment on the proposals.

1.0 INTRODUCTION:

1.1 This pre-application presentation relates to the proposed major development at site located at the junction of Whitehall Road, Springwell Road and Springwell Street which lies directly adjacent to the Leeds City Centre boundary. The initial work-in-progress proposals will be presented to Panel by the landowner and developer to allow Members to comment on the evolving scheme and raise any issues, prior to the intended submission of a full planning application.

2.0 SITE AND SURROUNDINGS:

2.1 The site lies at the junction of Whitehall Road, Springwell Road and Springwell Street, in an inner city part of Leeds, which is located in an area of transition just outside the boundary of the city centre. The site is also located along the Whitehall Road corridor, which is a main vehicular route, heading south-west from Leeds Train Station. The site is currently occupied by a low rise, industrial shed type buildings.

It is not clear what the previous use of these buildings were. The form of these buildings is considered to be poor and there is no objection to their demolition.

- 2.2 The site lies in area which historically was characterised by heavy industry and the railway. As the historical industries have ceased, many nearby sites have been cleared and benefit from planning consent for large, new mixed uses which are predominantly residential blocks.
- 2.3 The most notable site nearby is the Green Bank site which lies directly to the north of this site, across the adjacent train line. The Latitude building at the former Doncaster Monk Bridge site lies nearby on the opposite side of Whitehall Road. Heading north, towards Leeds Train Station, there are a number of large scale office and hotel schemes under construction along the Whitehall Road corridor. Directly south of the site is a relatively modern 4 storey mixed use block which accommodates a carpet and sandwich shop on the ground floor, with flats above.
- 2.4 The western edge of Holbeck Conservation Area and Holbeck Urban Village lies approximately 300m to the east of the site. Holbeck itself lies about 400m to the south west. The site is unallocated through the Leeds UDP.

3.0 PROPOSAL

- 3.1 The proposal is for a new residential apartment block, which steps up in height, from 3 storeys up to 16 storeys, with ground floor commercial units. The proposal comprises of 215 apartments, some with external roof terraces. The proposal is to be constructed from brick. It is proposed for all apartments within the block to be Private Rental Sector model (PRS model). This is a model where the freehold of the building is retained and all the apartments would be owned and managed by a sole company, and only available on the rental market.
- 3.2 The proposal comprises of the following residential units.
- 42 studio apartments
 - 89 one bed apartments
 - 70 two bed apartments
 - 14 three bed apartments

Two of the flats on each floor have a sizable external roof terrace (created by the stepped form of the building). 60 parking spaces are proposed for the apartments. The parking area is located to the rear of the building and has a landscaped deck roof which will offer the future occupiers a sizable external amenity area.

- 3.3 The ground floor includes two cycle store areas at 100 sq m and 31 sq m, two other stores at 35 and 48 sq m each, two offices each at 33 sq m, a plant room at 66 sq m, a commercial unit at 246 sq m, and bin stores.

4.0 HISTORY OF NEGOTIATIONS AND PLANNING HISTORY

- 4.1 Officers have had one pre-application meeting with the developers and their professional team in June 2016. This was also attended by highways and design officers. At the meeting the proposal to redevelop the site was welcomed and advice was given on housing mix; elevational treatment; need to be in accordance with the Tall Buildings SPD; landscaping of the site and the building; parking numbers; access matters; trip generation; affordable housing provision (5% of total) etc. The applicants were also informed of need to address potential obligation

issues including affordable housing, greenspace, Travel Plans etc. and the need to undertake wind study analysis and impact on views.

4.2 The developers presented this proposal to Holbeck Neighbourhood Forum on 14th May, where Councillors Gabriel and Ogilvie were in attendance. Feedback on this meeting has not been provided yet.

4.3 There is no relevant planning history to this site which is concerned with the comprehensive redevelopment of the site.

5.0 RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES

5.1 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) came into force in March 2012 and represents the government's commitment to sustainable development, through its intention to make the planning system more streamlined, localised and less restrictive. It aims to do this by reducing regulatory burdens and by placing sustainability at the heart of development process. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied, only to the extent that it is relevant, proportionate and necessary to do so.

The NPPF identifies 12 core planning principles (para 17) which include that planning should:

- Proactively drive and support sustainable economic development to deliver homes.
- Seek high quality design and a good standard of amenity for existing and future occupants.
- Encourage the reuse of existing resources, including conversion of existing buildings.
- Conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance.
- Actively manage patterns of growth to make the fullest possible use of public transport, walking and cycling.

The NPPF states that LPA's should recognise that residential development can play an important role in ensuring the vitality of centres (para 23). Housing applications should be considered in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development (para 49). LPA's should normally approve applications for change to residential use where there is an identified need for additional housing in the area (para 50).

Planning should proactively support sustainable economic development and seek to secure high quality design. It encourages the effective use of land and achieves standards of amenity for all existing and future occupiers of land and buildings. One of the core principles is the reuse of land that has previously been developed. Paragraph 49 states that housing applications should be considered in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development. The NPPF states that local authorities should deliver a wide choice of homes, widen opportunities for home ownership and create sustainable, inclusive and mixed communities (para 50).

On 6 March 2014 the Government launched the National Planning Practice Guidance, which brought together most national planning guidance and circulars under one web-based resource.

Development Plan

5.2 The Leeds Core Strategy was adopted by the Council on 12th November 2014. This now forms the development plan for Leeds together with the Natural Resources & Waste Plan and saved policies from the UDPR. A number of former UDP saved policies have been superseded by Core Strategy policies and have been deleted as a result of its adoption. Appendix 1 of the Core Strategy provides a full list of 'deleted' UDP policies and policies that continue to be 'saved' (including most land use allocations). Relevant Saved Policies would include:

- Policy BD2 (Design and siting of new buildings)
- Policy BD5 (All new buildings and amenity)
- Policy GP5 (All planning considerations)
- Policy LD1 (Landscaping)

5.3 Relevant Core Strategy Policies include:

- Spatial Policy 7 – Sets out the spatial distribution of the district wide housing requirement between Housing Market Characteristic Area. The site is in the City Centre HMCA with a requirement to provide 10,200 units (2012-28) Being consistent with the site allocation in the draft AVLAAP, the proposed development will contribute to the achievement to the housing targets set out under both the above policies.
- Spatial Policy 8 states that training/skills and job creation initiatives would be supported by planning agreements linked to the implementation of appropriate developments given planning permission.
- Spatial Policy 11 – Transport Investment Priorities – includes a priority related to improved facilities for pedestrians to promote safety and accessibility, particularly connectivity between the edges of the City Centre and the City Centre itself.
- Policy EC3 – Safeguards existing employment land and industrial areas unless specific criteria are met.
- Policy H2 – New housing development on non-allocated sites & Policy T2 accessibility requirements – refers the capacity of infrastructure and accessibility standards in Appendix 3. Links to local shops, primary schools, secondary schools, parks and employment locations are important.
- Policy H3 – Density of development. A minimum density target of 65 dwellings per hectare is set for edge of centre locations.
- Policy H4 says that developments should include an appropriate mix of dwelling types and sizes to address needs measured over the long-term taking into account the nature of the development and character of the location.
- Policy H5 – Affordable Housing. The affordable housing requirement would be 5% of the total number of units, with 40% for households on lower quartile earnings and 60% for households on lower decile earnings
- Policy EC3 Safeguarding existing employment land and industrial areas.

- Policy G4 – Open space requirements. Outside the City Centre the normal requirement is 80 sqm per dwelling. The delivery of a proportionate amount of open space per dwelling, both private and shared communal, and the provision of public realm, is important and is currently being discussed with the developer. Contribution to specific off-site greenspace enhancements to mitigate a shortfall on-site may be required.
- Policy G9 Biodiversity improvements
- Policies EN1 & EN2 Policy set targets for CO2 reduction and sustainable design & construction, including meeting the energy and carbon emissions reduction targets of the former Code for Sustainable Homes Level 4 and at least 10% low or zero carbon energy production on-site.
- Policy P10: Good design appropriate to its scale and function.
- Policies T1 and T2 identify transport management and accessibility requirements for new development.

5.4 Natural Resources & Waste Plan

The Natural Resources and Waste Development Plan Document (Local Plan) is part of the Local Development Framework. The plan sets out where land is needed to enable the City to manage resources, like minerals, energy, waste and water over the next 15 years, and identifies specific actions which will help use natural resources in a more efficient way. Policies regarding flood risk, drainage, air quality, trees, and land contamination are relevant to this proposal. The site is within the Minerals Safeguarding Area for Coal (Minerals 3) and Sand and Gravel (Minerals 2).

5.5 Relevant Supplementary Planning Guidance includes:

- SPD Street Design Guide
- SPD Travel Plans
- SPD Building for Tomorrow Today: Sustainable Design and Construction
- SPG Neighbourhoods for Living
- SPD Parking
- Tall Building Design Guide SPD 2010
- Emerging Holbeck Neighbourhood Plan (Draft May 2016) encompasses the following matters;
 - Need for affordable housing.
 - Need for single bedroom properties, larger family homes (4 beds plus) and independent living facilities.
 - Provision of pedestrian and cycle links, and green corridors, along with active frontages. Encourage cross links between Holbeck and Holbeck Urban Village.
 - Encouraging a mix of uses in appropriate areas, improving look of the area, enhanced public realm.
 - The application site is marked as for general employment/commercial uses, within the strategic green infrastructure, and the small triangle of land in the road junction to the front is earmarked as local green space.

Other material considerations

5.6. Vision for Leeds 2011-2030

One of the aims is that by 2030 Leeds' economy will be more prosperous and sustainable. This includes having a skilled workforce to meet the needs of the local economy, and creating significant job opportunities. The vision also states that

Leeds will be a great place to live, where local people benefit from regeneration investment, and there is sufficient housing, including affordable housing, that meets the need of the community.

5.7 The Leeds Standard

The Leeds Standard was adopted by the Council's Executive Board on 17 September 2014. The introduction of a Leeds Standard seeks to ensure excellent quality in the delivery of new council homes under three themes: Design Quality, Space Standards and Energy Efficiency Standards. It sets out how the Council can use the Leeds Standard in its role as Council landlord through its delivery and procurement approaches. Through its actions the Council can also seek to influence quality in the private sector. Those aspects of the Standard concerned with design quality will be addressed through better and more consistent application of the Council's Neighbourhoods for Living guidance. The Leeds Standard sets out the importance of excellent quality housing in supporting the economic growth ambitions of the council.

6.0 ISSUES

Members are asked to consider the following matters in particular:

6.1 Principle of the scheme

The principle of this application is very much supported. The proposal would regenerate an unused brownfield site, which is located in a very sustainable location. The proposal would provide a new quality building, pushing the regeneration of this part of Holbeck further south along the Whitehall Road corridor, and the development has the potential to act as a catalyst to promote further regeneration in this part of Holbeck, and provide a new link, activity and focal point between the new developments which are sited to the east and within Holbeck Urban Village, such as Tower Works and the new developments situated along the Whitehall Road corridor. The proposal would provide an active ground floor frontage, and a degree of interaction with the street scene.

Although the proposed development does provide a mix of unit sizes, the number of 3 bed units does seem to be under the minimum requirements of policy H4. The table below highlights Policy H4 (Housing Mix) outlining the suggested min. and max levels of accommodation sizes and the proposed mix of accommodation:

Size	Max%	Min%	Target%	Actual Number	Actual %
1 bed	50	0	10	131	61
2 Bed	80	30	50	70	33
3 bed	70	20	30	14	7
4 bed	50	0	10	0	0

As can be seen the proposal does not provide for the target identified in Policy H4 however it does reflect the draft neighbourhood plan, which calls for single bedroom properties, larger family houses (4 beds +) and independent living facilities. Whilst the proposal does not provide the latter two, it would not necessarily be felt appropriate to have larger family housing within such a flatted scheme due to the lack of immediate outdoor amenity space. Given the proximity to the city centre, it is likely that the demand for single room units would be higher and could help to take the demand away from the existing larger terraced properties in Holbeck which are under threat of conversion to HMO's and flats.

With regard to affordable housing the applicants are currently proposing a form that is different to that required by policy in that the units would not be released to a social landlord but all units in the scheme would be rented out by the landowners. The applicants have been advised that they are required to provide 5% affordable units and that a housing needs assessment would be required.

Do Members agree that the proposed use of the site for a predominantly residential scheme, PRS model of tenure, and the mix of dwellings proposed, would be appropriate?

Design / Landscaping Matters

- 6.2 The proposal steps up in height from 3 storey to a peak of 16 storeys. It is considered that the proposal complies with the general design principles of the adopted 'Tall Buildings' SPD which is that the site would provide a gateway along one of the routes to the train station, at the end of an existing ribbon of tall buildings that stretches out along Whitehall Road (including buildings still under construction or proposed). A wind study and any resulting proposed wind mitigation measures would need to be submitted as part of the application submission.
- 6.3 Officers consider that the building appearance would be improved if it was constructed from a single brick material, as opposed to a mixture of brick colours, to give the building an increasing simple and elegant appearance. It is considered that the panels located to the side of the windows, within the recessed window openings should be a simple linear appearance as opposed to some of the more complicated and heavily patterned options. It is also considered that the differing windows arrangements within the recessed sections should be simplified to create a gentle and simple pattern within the elevations.
- 6.4 Officers have also raised concerns regarding the depth of the soil pits which are to be provided on the roof terraces. It is important this issue is properly considered to ensure the trees will grow in such an exposed and constrained environment, and the soil volumes required, to ensure the trees grow and flourish.
- 6.5 The planting of trees along the Whitehall frontage is again something which is very much welcomed by Officers and will continue the boulevard theme of tree planting which is emerging along Whitehall Road. Nearby recent developments such as Whitehall Place and Latitude (Doncaster Monkbridge site) have all included tree planting along Whitehall Road. This also fits with the aspirations of the emerging Holbeck Neighbourhood Plan to provide 'green corridors'. This will contribute towards the quality and perception of the Whitehall Road as a main route leading to and from Leeds Train Station.

Do Members agree that the scale, height, design and form of the proposed development are appropriate at this location? Do Members have concerns over the proposed appearance and use of materials? Are there any comments regarding the landscaping proposals for the site?

Quality / Size of Development

- 6.6 The development offers a communal large roof terrace, above the car park and 20 apartments have roof terraces. The size of the units varies from studios, to 3 bed apartments. Leeds have adopted a set of Standards, based on the Department for Communities and Local Government Technical nationally described space standards, and this applies to Council Housing. When looking at private housing schemes it is appropriate to assess the scheme against either the Leeds Standard

or the DCLG standard, both will carry limited weight at the moment due to the fact that we do not yet have adopted policy for private developers. However they do provide a useful guide against which to assess the practicalities and amenity provision of a housing scheme. The table below shows the size of the proposed apartments, against the DCLG Standards, it should be noted that the size standards apply to gross internal floor areas and the figures given are minimum sizes. Sizes also vary according to the number of intended occupants and the number of storey's that a property will have. The applicants have not stated how many people they expect to occupy the units, however each floor layout shows that all bedrooms are proposed to fit double beds.

	Proposal – square metres	DCLG housing standards – square metres
Studio (1 person)	31	37 – where a shower room is provided in place of a bathroom. Plus 1 sq m of storage space.
One bed	37 – 39	37 – as above for one person. 50 – for two people. Plus 1 – 1.5 sq m of storage.
Two bed	56.5 – 62	61 –for 3 people. 70 – for 4 people. Plus 2 sq m of storage.
Three bed	75	74 –for 4 people. 86 – for 5 people. 95 – for 6 people. Plus 2.5 sq m of storage.

- 6.7 In response to concerns relating to spacing standards, the applicants have stated that they have created apartments that provide all the room and storage size requirements of a 'standard' unit, but eliminates the dark/unattractive corridors. This is done by having the entrance to each flat open onto an open plan living/kitchen area that runs through to the external wall, with the bathrooms up against the internal communal corridor, and bedrooms to the sides. All rooms therefore have an external window except bathrooms. The resulting apartments therefore deliver a practical living space that provides functionality with an efficient layout. Certainly on paper the layout of the rooms does not appear overly cramped or awkward. Each unit would provide kitchen units and cooking area, dining area, lounge area, shower or bathrooms (two and three bed units have two of these), double bedrooms with wardrobe space and adequate circulation space.

Are Members satisfied with the size and type of the accommodation on offer? Do they feel that the proposed layouts offer sufficient amenity for residents?

Car parking provision and accessibility

- 6.8 The scheme proposes 60 covered car parking spaces, which would equate to 30% parking provision. The site is located in a sustainable location with good access to public transport on Whitehall Road and is located approximately 1km (1/2 mile) to Leeds City Train Station, which is within a good walking distance. The facilities of the City Centre are also within walking distance, and there are also shops, restaurants, bars, gyms etc. along Whitehall Road and its environs. Secure cycle storage would be provided for each dwelling. The applicant will need to justify their approach to parking provision, including visitor parking as this would not meet the

requirements of current policy. A Transport Assessment and Travel Plan are also needed.

The applicants are also looking at options to close off the highway of Springwell Street which lies in front of the site, subject to suitable junction improvements at Whitehall Road/ Springwell Road, which will offer an alternative access. The principle of making this island site available as public realm with further planting is actively welcomed, as it would provide an attractive setting for the development and would fulfill one of the aims in the emerging Holbeck Neighbourhood Plan. Further details of these proposed highway works, would be required to offer full and final comments on this element of the scheme.

Members are asked to comment on the level of car parking being provided and whether a lower provision is considered acceptable given the location. Members are also asked to comment on the proposal for public realm improvements in front of the site.

Section 106 Obligations and CIL

- 6.9 The proposal would be subject to the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) which is estimated at £63,750 based on the current proposal (this excludes the ancillary ground floor commercial uses, as it is unknown what use class will occupy this space).

Adopted policies would result in the following necessary Section 106 matters:

- Affordable Housing – provision of 5% of the total units on-site in accordance with the policy for the area
- Specific travel plan measure contributions to be agreed
- Travel plan monitoring fee
- Off-site greenspace contribution in accordance with Policy G4
- Cooperation with local jobs and skills initiatives
- Management fee

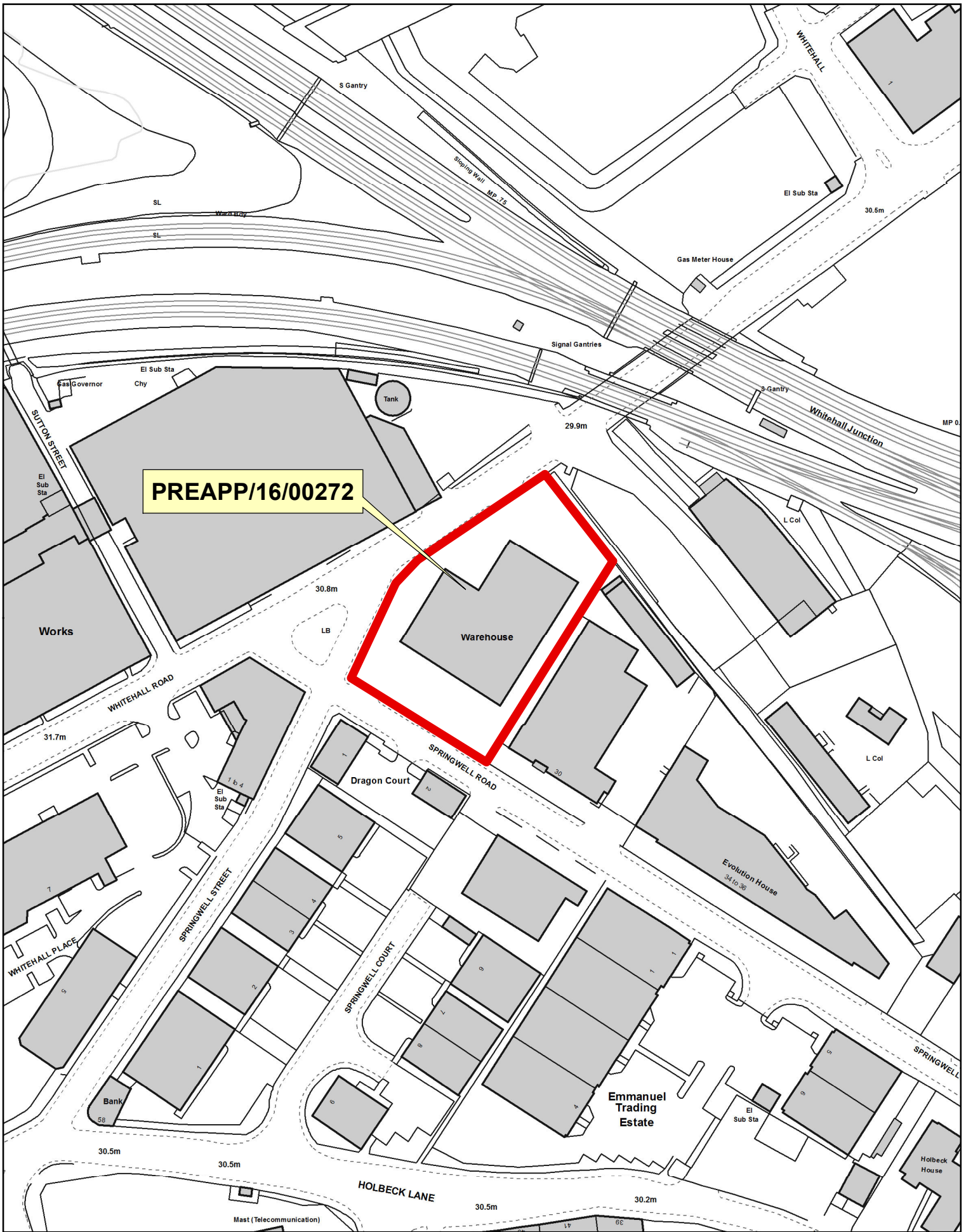
Other obligations may become apparent during the progress of any application, e.g. off-site highway works, metro contributions.

7.0 Conclusion

This scheme is a significant regeneration opportunity that could contribute positively to the regeneration of Holbeck and provide a quality development along the Whitehall Road corridor. The site is likely to act as a gateway into the city centre along Whitehall road, but could also catalyze further redevelopment of the area to the west leading into Holbeck and bringing investment and job opportunities. Members' views are sought at an early stage on the evolving scheme, in particular on the following matters:

- 7.1 **Do Members agree that the proposed use of the site for a predominantly residential scheme, PRS model of tenure, and the mix of dwellings proposed, would be appropriate?**
- 7.2 **Do Members agree that the scale, height, design and form of the proposed development are appropriate at this location? Do Members have concerns over the proposed appearance and use of materials? Are there any comments regarding the landscaping proposals for the site?**

- 7.3 Are Members satisfied with the size and type of the accommodation on offer? Do they feel that the proposed layouts offer sufficient amenity for residents?**
- 7.4 Members are asked to comment on the level of car parking being provided and whether a lower provision is considered acceptable given the location. Members are also asked to comment on the proposal for public realm improvements in front of the site.**
- 7.5 Do Members have any other comments at this stage?**



CITY PLANS PANEL

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

SCALE : 1/1500



6.1 PROPOSED SITE LAYOUT

Scale 1:500 on A3
Total: 215

- Studio Apartment (42)
- 1 Bed Apartment (89)
- 2 Bed Apartment (70)
- 3 Bed Apartment (14)

