

## **CITY PLANS PANEL**

**THURSDAY, 15TH FEBRUARY, 2018**

**PRESENT:** Councillor J McKenna in the Chair

Councillors P Gruen, D Blackburn, G Latty,  
T Leadley, N Walshaw, C Campbell,  
A Khan, A Garthwaite, B Selby,  
C Macniven and E Nash

Member's site visits were held in connection with the following proposals:  
Application No. 17/02790/FU – Land to rear of Merton Close, Kippax, Leeds  
25, PREAPP/17/00619 – Hume House, Merrion Way, Leeds 2 and was  
attended by the following Councillors: J McKenna, P Gruen, D Blackburn,  
G Latty, T Leadley, C Campbell and E Nash

### **111 Chair's Opening Remarks**

The Chair congratulated Councillor Graham Latty on his selection as Lord Mayor elect and also to Councillor Pat Latty as the Lady Mayoress for 2018/19.

### **112 Appeals Against Refusal of Inspection of Documents**

There were no appeals against the refusal of inspection of documents.

### **113 Exempt Information - Possible Exclusion of Press and Public**

There were no items identified where it was considered necessary to exclude the press or public from the meeting due to the nature of the business to be considered.

### **114 Late Items**

There were no late items of business to be considered.

### **115 Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests**

There were no declarations of any disclosable pecuniary interests made at the meeting.

### **116 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor R Procter.

### **117 Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> January 2018 were submitted for consideration and approval.

**RESOLVED** – That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> January 2018 be accepted as a true and correct record.

#### **118 Matters Arising from the Minutes**

There were no issues raised under matters arising.

#### **119 Application No. 17/02790/FU - Residential development of 43 houses with associated landscaping and access on land to the rear of 5 and 14 Merton Close, Kippax, Leeds 25**

The Chief Planning Officer submitted a report which set out details of an application for residential development of 43 houses with associated landscaping and access on land to the rear of 5 and 14 Merton Close, Kippax, Leeds 25.

Site photographs and plans were displayed and referred to throughout the discussion of the application.

The Planning Case Officer addressed the Panel, speaking in detail about the proposal and highlighted the following:

- The development was originally submitted for 41 houses and through negotiations over time, principally relating to layout and housing mix issues, that number increased to 46 and is now reduced to 43 units.
- The proposals include a cul-de-sac development, due to the size, nature and location of the site, through extending the existing highway beyond the end of Merton Close. The layout includes a spine road leading to a cul-de-sac with houses on one side, overlooking the Sandgate Lane footpath and the greenspace and other open land to the west. A cul-de-sac to the north results in houses overlooking the landscape buffer, retained existing hedgerow and agricultural land to the north. The cul-de-sac to the south contains houses which front the street. Two properties are located sideways on to the street, but this is over a short distance and is not an unusual relationship. The properties on the southern side of the site back on to the existing properties on Sandgate Drive and Merton Close, though they are separated by a narrow strip of land which is not in the applicant's ownership.
- The scheme contains a bungalow proposed to the north of No.14 Merton close, though the remainder of the properties are two storey houses. Thirteen house types, including the bungalow, are proposed for the market sale units, whilst a further two house types are proposed for the Affordable Housing units.

- The proposals include the retention of the strong hedgerow feature to the north and east of the site, as well as the retention of vegetation and landscape setting to Sandgate Lane, to the western side of the site.

In response to Members questions, the following issues were discussed:

- The development appeared to be a long way from local amenities: schools, medical practice and shops, could an indication of the distance be provided
- The site was adjacent to the Persimmon Homes site, were there any development links
- The Sandgate Lane footpath, could an improved surface be included as part of the landscape requirements
- There appeared to be a lack of public open space on the site.
- Could a dog waste litter bin be provided on the Sandgate Lane footpath

The Planning Case Officer provided the following responses:

- In terms of distance to amenities it was reported that: Ash Tree Primary School, Kippax was a 7 minute walk away, Brigshaw High School was a 30 minute walk and the High Street was a 13 minute walk.
- Officers confirmed that there were no development links with Persimmon Homes, though both sites form part of one designated Protected Areas of Search (PAS) in the UDP (Review)
- Officers reported that as part of the Persimmon Homes development the developers had agreed to provide a crushed limestone surface to the Sandgate Lane footpath
- Officers confirmed there was sufficient public open space on the overall development of the PAS site (including both the application site and adjacent Persimmon site)
- Officers confirmed that the provision of a dog waste litter bin on the Sandgate Lane footpath could be provided if the applicant was agreeable, though it was not necessary to make the application acceptable in planning terms

In offering comments Members raised the following issues:

- A number of Members expressed disappointment at the design of the house types suggesting they were bland
- There appeared to be some elevations which suggested a single window and in some cases a blank wall, could the design be revisited so it would not look so “dreary”
- The adjacent site was granted on appeal so it would be unrealistic to consider refusing the application

In summing up the Chair thanked the Developers for their attendance and asked if the design issues raised by Members could be looked at again, but in general Members appeared to be supportive of the proposals.

**RESOLVED** – That the application be deferred and delegated to the Chief Planning Officer for approval subject to the conditions specified in the submitted report and noting the request for the provision of a dog waste litter bin (and with the inclusion of any other amendments/additions which he might consider appropriate) and following the completion of a Section 106 Agreement to cover the following obligations:

- Provision of Affordable Housing (7 units).
- On site landscaping / green space to be made available and maintained by the developer and retained for the lifetime of the development.
- Employment and training initiatives in relation to the construction process.

In the event of the Section 106 Agreement having not been completed within 3 months of the Panel resolution to grant planning permission, the final determination of the application shall be delegated to the Chief Planning Officer.

**120 Pre-application presentation of proposed pedestrian improvements to be provided at the junction of Portland Crescent and Woodhouse Lane, Leeds 2 (PREAPP/17/00489)**

The Chief Planning Officer submitted a report which sets out details of a pre-application for proposed pedestrian improvements to be provided at the junction of Portland Crescent and Woodhouse Lane, Leeds 2.

Site plans were displayed and referred to throughout the discussion of the application.

The applicant's representatives addressed the Panel, speaking in detail about the proposal and highlighted the following:

- The temporary pedestrian facilities, including a dropped crossing across Portland Crescent, would be removed. An area immediately north of the building would be laid out as potential spill out space from the interior of the building. Beyond this a new 5.5 metre wide footpath laid out in high quality concrete paving would link an existing dropped crossing to Cookridge Street and a new dropped crossing across Portland Crescent aligning with the existing pedestrian footway which runs along the northern periphery of the Rose Bowl surface car park. A second dropped crossing would be provided for pedestrians between the entrance to the Rose Bowl surface car park and underground car park.
- The external space would be laid out to complement the new public realm presently coming forward at the junction of Woodhouse Lane / Clay Pit Lane / Cookridge Street. A strip of soft landscaping adjacent to the highway would be provided following the sweep of the site adjacent to Woodhouse Lane. The soft landscaping strip would include a total of

5 trees set within a shrub planting. A smaller planting bed would be formed, including a further two trees, alongside Cookridge Street.

- The traffic island in the centre of Woodhouse Lane north of the site would be extended to impede vehicles illegally turning right into Portland Crescent from Woodhouse Lane.

Members raised the following questions:

- What was the timescale for completion of the works, not just this site but for the whole of the Portland Crescent/ Woodhouse Lane Junction improvement scheme
- Who would be responsible for maintenance of the area once the scheme was completed
- Would the landscaped areas include lighting schemes

In responding to the issues raised, the applicant's representatives and council officers said:

- The applicant was responsible for the delivery of the scheme adjacent to the proposed student building whilst Leeds City Council were responsible for the delivery of the scheme to the other former underpass areas but final designs for the other areas of the junction were still awaited.
- Once completed the junction would become an adopted highway and maintained by the City Council
- Lighting schemes would be included in consultation with the City Council

In offering comments Members raised the following issues:

- More detailed information was required for the whole of the scheme

In summing up the Chair said that further details about the design/ appearance of the junction were required and that a report should come back to Plans Panel in due course.

## **RESOLVED –**

- (i) To note the details contained in the pre-application presentation
- (ii) That the developers be thanked for their attendance and presentation
- (iii) That a further report be prepared and brought back to Plans Panel on the proposals for the whole of the Portland Crescent/ Woodhouse Lane Junction improvement scheme

**121 Pre-application presentation of the proposed redevelopment of Hume House, Wade Lane, Merrion Way and Tower House Street, Leeds 2 to form a 36 storey student accommodation building (PREAPP/17/00619)**

The Chief Planning Officer submitted a report which sets out details of a pre-application for the proposed redevelopment of Hume House, Wade Lane, Merrion Way and Tower House Street, Leeds 2 to form a 36 storey student accommodation building.

Site photographs and plans were displayed and referred to throughout the discussion of the application.

The applicant's representatives addressed the Panel, speaking in detail about the proposal and highlighted the following:

- It was proposed to demolish the existing building and to construct a 36 storey building in its place. The axis of the building would rotate to align with Wade Lane to the south-east rather than Tower House Street as with the current structure. The southern elevation of the building would project approximately 11m forward of the existing building towards Merrion Way, the lowest two levels above ground primarily around the frontage would be set some 3m further back. The upper body of the building also oversails areas of the lowest levels on the eastern and western elevations. At its closest point the northern elevation of the building would be 8.45m from the Arena Village tower.
- The ground floor of the student accommodation building would comprise the reception and management offices, a common room including a double-height space around the southern entrance, and other supporting facilities such as laundrette and bin store. A plant room and bike store would be provided at Level -1. Level 1 would contain additional common room and study area facilities and the first level of student accommodation. Further study rooms are proposed at Level 24. Excluding the cluster space 563m<sup>2</sup> of student amenity space is proposed. The accommodation comprises a mix of studios (22m<sup>2</sup>) and 4, 5 and 6 bedroom clusters (study bedrooms typically 14m<sup>2</sup>) with associated kitchen / living areas. In total, 102 studios and 652 cluster bedrooms are proposed, 754 bedspaces overall.
- Active spaces at the lowest two levels of the building would have double-height glazing with a cantilevered soffit height of 7m. The upper levels of the building would be ordered and disciplined, formed of smaller domestic elements of which it would be composed. The architectural style would loosely be termed 'stretched classicism'. It is intended that a high-quality artificial stone is used as the principal building material.
- A new layby would be formed on Tower House Street to be used for deliveries and student drop-off at the beginning and end of years. It is intended to reduce kerb levels and to enhance the surface to make

Tower House Street more pedestrian friendly. A new paved surface is proposed to the public realm immediately surrounding the development. Raised planters would be introduced towards the north side of the building, including new street trees, together with totem structures to assist in wind mitigation. Similar totem structures are proposed to the front, southern end, of the building as wind mitigation but also intended to serve the dual purpose of public art. A specimen tree would be planted closer to Merrion Way to replace the existing tree that would need to be removed.

Members raised the following questions:

- Possible wind implications due to the proposed height of the building, had any testing been undertaken
- Could further details about the security of the building be provided: how would residents gain access to the building, how would residents access the lifts and what security measures were proposed for the top floor.
- Was the proposed external material cleanable
- Could further details be provided about the proposals for the communal areas
- Could further details be provided about the landscape and lighting proposals
- What was the timescale for the completion of the building
- Had any analysis been undertaken about the demand for student accommodation in this area

In responding to the issues raised, the applicant's representatives said:

- It was confirmed that wind testing had been undertaken
- Entry to the building would be by the use of a key fob, the same key fob would allow access to the lifts. The building would be managed and would incorporate a CCTV scheme throughout. A suitable height balustrade would be developed for the top floor along with CCTV monitoring.
- It was confirmed that the external materials could be cleaned
- The communal areas were still being developed but it was envisaged that study rooms, a cinema, fitness rooms and lounges would be incorporated within this area.
- New street trees would be located and planters would be incorporated throughout the ground floor area, a lighting scheme would be developed for the public realm areas and would also be included within the wind baffles/ totem structures
- In terms of timescales, it was anticipated that work would begin on site summer 2018 with delivery 2021/22
- In terms of demand for student accommodation within the city centre, it was reported that the student population had seen a year on year increase over the past 4 years, with a 5% increase in the last year

alone. It was therefore anticipated that there was a demand with further growth expected

In offering comments Members raised the following issues:

- Impressive design, nice to see quality materials being used
- Very attractive design
- “Pinch point” at the extreme north end of the development could lead to possible wind funnelling
- A small number of Members considered the room sizes to be too small
- The design and quality of this building would set the standard for other tall buildings to follow.
- Welcome proposals for tall buildings but the skyline needs to be managed and the proposals need to be shown in the context of other committed development
- Leeds has a vibrant, diverse city centre which welcomes people of all ages to live in, but there is a need for the Council to lead on a strategic vision.

In drawing the discussion to a conclusion Members provided the following feedback;

- Members considered the proposed student use was acceptable in principle
- The majority of Members considered the living conditions within the student accommodation to be acceptable
- Members were of the view that the emerging scale and design of the proposed new building and its relationship with the surrounding context was acceptable
- Members were of the view that the development should deliver improvements to the public realm in the area beyond the immediate periphery of the site.

In summing up the Chair said it was heartening to see a design at such an early stage which all Members appeared to like. Members looked forward to the submission of a formal application

(Under the provisions of Council Procedure Rule 16.5 Councillors: C Campbell and G Latty required it to be recorded that they considered the living conditions within the student accommodation to be unacceptable)

#### **RESOLVED –**

- (i) To note the details contained in the pre-application presentation
- (ii) That the developers be thanked for their attendance and presentation

## **122 Date and Time of Next Meeting**

Draft minutes to be approved at the meeting  
to be held on Thursday, 8th March, 2018



**RESOLVED** – To note that the next meeting will take place on Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> March 2018 at 1.30pm in the Civic Hall, Leeds.