



Report of the Chief Planning Officer

PLANS PANEL WEST

Date: 13th October 2011

Subject: PROGRESS REPORT; BRIDGE ROAD, KIRKSTALL – MIXED RETAIL REDEVELOPMENT AT BRITISH HOME STORES, BRIDGE ROAD, KIRKSTALL.

APPLICANT

Metric Property Kirkstall Ltd

DATE VALID

18th August 2011

TARGET DATE

17 November 2011

Electoral Wards Affected:

Kirkstall

Yes

Ward Members consulted
(referred to in report)

Specific Implications For:

Equality and Diversity

Community Cohesion

Narrowing the Gap

RECOMMENDATION: Members are requested to note the progress report below and are invited to comment on the main issues concerning:

Principle of development

Highway safety and car parking

Public transport and travel plan contributions

Design/visual amenity

Flood Defences

Impact on landscaping and ecology

Boundary treatments

1.0 INTRODUCTION:

1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform Panel of progress on an application submitted by Metric Property Kirkstall for a mixed retail development at the British Home Stores site on Bridge Road.

2.0 PROPOSAL:

- 2.1 The application is for the redevelopment of the site to provide 16,619 square metres of gross external area (GEA) and 16,232 square metres of gross internal area (GIA) divided into four areas :
- 2.2 There is a replacement BHS store plus a smaller unit proposed in one block to the rear of the site. This will have a total Gross Internal Area of 2,058 square metres. The building for the new BHS will be 54 metres by 26 metres to a height of 8.5 metres to the eaves and 9.5 metres to the pitch. The other unit will be 29 metres by 25 metres to the same height as the new BHS. This building will be two storey in height and will have its frontage onto the proposed car park and its servicing to the rear. The materials will be glass and re constituted stone cladding on the front elevation. The stone element will return round to the side elevations for the first 14 metres on each side and the rest of the side elevations and rear will be red brick with composite cladding above.
- 2.3 The second block will be 4,320 square metres of gross internal area which will run down the western boundary along side the River Aire. The building will be long 115 metres and 8.2 metres in height to the eaves and 9.8 metres to the pitch. It is a two storey block and will be a flexible building as it can be broken up into different combinations depending on retail occupier requirements. Some may have mezzanines but this floorspace has been taken into account and will not be greater than the proposed 16,232 square metres for the whole site. This buildings main frontage will be onto the car park and will be glass and red brick. The rear elevation will be onto the River Aire and will be red brick and composite cladding above. The servicing will be to the rear and the service yard will have green fences to shield the yards and provide some acoustic screening.
- 2.4 The third element will be a main store onto Bridge Road which will have a ground floor space of 1,858 square metres. This will be attached to the second block described above. This will be constructed of glazing and re constituted stone on the frontage with a small element of zinc feature cladding. The upper half of the glazing will be aluminium bris soeil. The re constituted stone will be on the side elevation for the first 20.5 metres then red brick and composite cladding for the rest . The roof will have a small pitch and will be constructed from profiled aluminium colour coated roofing system. This building will be 38 metres in width at the Bridge Road end and 46 metres where it adjoins the second block. Its length will be 34 metres at the front and 52 metres at the rear. The height will be 8.4 metres to the eaves and 9.5 metres at the pitch. The occupier of this unit with be another anchor tenant which along with BHS forms the two anchor tenants for the development.
- 2.5 The final element is the building facing Bridge Road. This will be two storey and account for 1,543 square metres. The building will be just short of 25 metres in width and the two storey element 58 metres in length. This building is two sided and can be traded from both the front and the rear. This will be marketed to a mix of retailers in the form of restaurants/cafes/ coffee shops. The plans show that there will be 5 units with the extent of mezzanine depending on the occupiers requirement. It will consist of glazing and red brick to the front elevation with a slate roof. Both ends will be red brick with a glass corridor between the two. At the western end will be an additional single storey unit fully glazed on the front and side elevation with glazing and red brick on the rear elevation.
- 2.6 The proposed access will be the existing access at the eastern part of the site next to an existing sub station. The access will be round the perimeter of the site with the egress on the western part of the site next to the adjoining office building. The car park will be in the centre of the site.

- 2.7 It is proposed to remove part of the embankment on the western boundary along the River Aire with a retaining wall and a small flood wall along the eastern side of the site. Boundary treatments will be walls and weldmesh fences. There will be landscaping comprised off individual trees within the car park plus off site tree planting subject to the landowners.

3.0 SITE AND SURROUNDINGS:

- 3.1 The application site comprises the former Alders department store in a single building of varying elements with a car park surrounding the building on all sides. The floorspace of the current building on site is 12,730 sqm. British Home Stores occupy the building at the current time. Vehicular and pedestrian access is from Bridge Road where the front entrance into the store is located. To the east of the site is the Abbey Light railway and Abbey Mills, to the west there is the Kirkstall Design Centre and the River Aire, to the north there is a single dwelling at the Weir and beyond that the River Aire and Kirkstall Abbey, to the south there is the Morrison's development and a rugby training ground. The site forms part of the defined Kirkstall District Centre in the adopted UDP. The existing building is brick and two storey fronting Bridge Road with a series of pitched roof industrial sheds behind. The landmark clock tower on top of the building was removed in 2005 for safety reasons.

4.0 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY:

H26/47/77 – Change of use of warehouse to retail sales. Refused 25 Jul 1977 but allowed on appeal 11 Oct 1978
24/113/03/FU – removal of condition B of H26/47/77 (sales of durable goods only). Approved 5 Sep 2003
24/413/04/fu – application for 9 retail units and 3 food and drink units refused permission on 22 January 2007 allowed on appeal on 7th April 2008.
10/01298/EXT – extension of time application for the 9 retail units and 3 food and drink units approved 9/2/2011 (was approved by panel on 12 August 2010.)

5.0 HISTORY OF NEGOTIATIONS:

- 5.1 Negotiations at pre application stage commenced in early 2011. Officers have been negotiating with the developer regarding this proposal for a number of months. The plans have evolved through these negotiations concluding with the plans being presented to you today.

6.0 PUBLIC/LOCAL RESPONSE:

Councillor Illingworth – Essential that this application is considered and determined in parallel with the expected Tesco application at Kirkstall Lane and in full knowledge of the latest information about Kirkstall Forge. Sense Metric might be trying to 'create facts' and have their application considered as a 'minor amendment' in advance of any Tesco scheme and such attempts should be strenuously resisted. Previous scheme was granted on appeal and whilst West Panel resolved to oppose the application the issue of highways was not raised by officers at the appeal. Despite the previous planning consent granted on the site we need to reopen the

highway issue. All three major retail operators in Kirkstall need to put their heads together with the Council and the Kirkstall Forge developer in order to devise a workable solution. Council needs to ensure that public transport has priority and should continue to do so. This could involve consideration of re-alignment of the existing road network, creation of new bus lanes and a re-think of the way the network operates. There is a serious risk that a premature decision on the Metric scheme could permanently damage future development in the area. This would not be in the public interest.

Councillor Atha – I totally support Councillor Illingworths appeal for the three schemes to be considered together. To consider one scheme without considering in principle the effects of the others would make no sense.

Councillor Walshaw (Headingley Ward) I agree with Councillor Illingworth that the applications should be considered in terms of their cumulative impact and transport issues are central to this.

Keith Collridge chair of Gilbert and Sandford Residents Association – Totally agree with Councillor Illingworths comments. Kirkstall already at saturation point and residents have already expressed their fears over this issue.

John Liversedge Kirkstall Valley Communication Association – Councillor Illingworths makes very good points the focal point of the application must be the traffic issues.

Leeds Civic Trust – Offers its support for the development with the following comments;

- Developers have gained an understanding of the way in which Kirkstall operates and how a retail park on this site could make a positive contribution to the community
- Strong pedestrians links need to be developed between this site and other retail units within the district.
- Highways is very complex and feel that adding yet more traffic light junction to an already complex network is not the answer. Need to go back to first principles and develop a road layout which acknowledges the existence of the various retail parks in the area while not condemning the pedestrians to a mass of crossing interrupted by corrals on small traffic islands.

7.0 CONSULTATIONS RESPONSES:

STATUTORY CONSULTEES

Environment Agency – No objections subject to conditions in relation to works required as part of the submitted Flood Risk Assessment.

NON-STATUTORY CONSULTEES

Highways – The proposal cannot be supported as submitted due to the following:

- The traffic assessment needs amending to include all GFA in the assessment and to represent the proposal for an element of food retailing.
- Need restriction to include no more than 706 sqm GFA of food retail

- Parking provision is very low and should be increased
- Proposed egress signals are located too close to the adjacent access road (Sandford Place) and do not provide adequate lane widths or cycling facilities on Bridge Road through the new traffic lights. Additional land from the site frontage is needed to achieve an appropriate road layout.

Amendments have been submitted to cover these matters.

The transport assessment has been revised and they are being considered by Highway Officers.

The developer is to submit information regarding the highway management of the car park spaces and their justification for a reduced level of car parking.

A revised plan showing revision of the egress has been submitted which requires minor alterations and can be accepted by highway officers.

NGT Planning Coordinator – a contribution of £223,298 should be sought for public transport improvements. This is based on the increase in GFA from the application based on the contribution required as part of the appeal which was £170,000.

Ecology – concerns regarding the treatment of the river bank and extent of works not entirely clear. May require otter survey to be submitted

Access officer – Amendments to car park required.

Policy – The proposal is within an town centre location so no objection

Architectural liaison Officer – Offers suggestions to improve safety.

Coal authority – No objections subject to conditions

Yorkshire water – No objections subject to conditions

Contaminated Land – No objections subject to conditions

Transport Policy – Amendments to the Green Travel Plan required.

8.0 PLANNING POLICIES:

Leeds UDP Review (2006)

- 8.1 The site comprises land outside the main urban area but inset within the green belt in the adopted Leeds UDP Review (2006). No specific allocations or designations affect the site (with the exception of the recreation ground which is a protected playing pitch under Policy N6). Relevant policies comprise:

PPS1 – Creating sustainable communities.

PPS4 – Planning for Sustainable Economic Growth

The site is unallocated in the Leeds Unitary Development Plan (2006) and is located within the town centre of Kirkstall.

Relevant Unitary Development Policies;

S2 – vitality and viability of town centres to be maintained and enhanced.

S3 – enhancement and maintenance of town centres.

S3a – priority given to refurbishment and enhancement of Kirkstall.

BD5 – new buildings design consideration given to own amenity and surroundings.

N12 – priorities for urban design.

N13 – new buildings should be of high quality.

LD1 – landscape scheme.

T2 – development capable of being served by highway network.

T24 – car parking guidelines.

GP5 – detailed planning considerations should be resolved including design and loss of amenity.

PPS1 “Delivering Sustainable Development” 2005

- 8.2 Para 3 states that sustainable development is a core principle underlying the planning system. Para 18/19 states that planning should seek to “improve” and “enhance” the local environment. Para 27 states that planning authorities should improve access to jobs, health, education, shops, leisure and community facilities and open space by foot, cycle or car to reduce reliance on car. Para 27 also states that planning authorities should promote the more efficient use of land through higher density development and bring vacant and underused land back into beneficial use.

PPG13 “Transport” 2006

- 8.3 Para 4 states key objectives as promoting more sustainable transport choices, promoting accessibility to jobs, shopping, leisure and other service by public transport and reducing need to travel by car. Para 74 states local planning authorities should identify routes for bus improvements and potential for improved transport interchange, and negotiate improvements in public transport provision. Para 76 and 79 state the importance of promoting walking and cycling as a prime means of access. Para 91 states that the acceptability of a Travel Plan will depend on the extent to which it materially affects the acceptability of development.

Adopted SPD “Public Transport Improvements and Developer Contributions” 2008

- 8.4 Para 4.3.15 states that the minimum level of accessibility to public transport should be 400m to a bus stop, offering a 15 minute (or better) service to a major public transport interchange, normally Leeds city centre, between 7am and 6pm, with a 30 min service up to 11pm and at weekends. Para 4.3.16. confirms that in locations where public transport accessibility is not acceptable, the developer is expected to establish and fund the measures required to make the site accessible.

Draft SPD “Travel Plans” 2007

- 8.5 Para 4.23 confirms that any applications comprising more than 50 dwellings will require a Travel Plan. Table 2 lists essential components of any Travel Plan . Table 6 lists the process for speculative outline applications.

9.0 MAIN ISSUES

1. Principle of development
2. Highways
3. Public Transport and Travel Plan Issues
4. Design/visual amenity
5. Landscaping and ecology
6. Boundary treatments and flood walls

10.0 APPRAISAL

1. Principle of development

- 10.1 The whole of the site is within the Town Centre boundary of Kirkstall so policy S2 is applicable which states that the vitality and viability of town centres listed within policy S2 will be maintained and enhanced in order to secure the best access for all sections of the community to a wide range of forms of retailing and other related services. The site has one large retail unit on the site and the proposal is for a range of retail units in terms of size plus some restaurants or cafes. The mix of uses on the site provides a range of retail uses for the surrounding area rather than one existing use. This should improve the vitality and viability of the town centre and complies with policy S2. This compliance with policy S2 as well as there being an existing use on the site and the fact that there is a live permission on the site for a mixed retail development lead officers to conclude that in principle the development is considered acceptable. **Members views are requested on the principle of development on the site.**

2. Highways

- 10.2 Planning permission has previously been granted for retail development on the site and this was renewed by Panel in August 2010 and is still a 'live' application. This application involves the same amount of floorspace as the approved application. However, this consent includes the ability to include some food retail (706 sqm) and this will exhibit higher trips rates than non retail floorspace does. The trip rates need to be recalculated including this food retail element. This has been submitted and highway officers are currently assessing.
- 10.3 There are less car parking spaces proposed than the previous scheme. The permitted scheme has 438 car parking spaces and this application has only 350 spaces. This needs to be looked into and information needs to be submitted to justify this reduction in car parking numbers. This information is being collated by the applicant and is due to be submitted shortly for officer opinion.
- 10.4 The access to the site is using an existing access and is considered acceptable for the development. Concerns were raised by officers regarding the proposed egress from the site and the safety of cyclists on Bridge Road. Amended plans have been submitted regarding this egress which subject to a couple of minor changes can be supported by officers. **Members views are requested regarding highway safety and the level of car parking provided and regarding concerns that the application should be considered with full knowledge and understanding of the highway network**

3. Public transport contribution

- 10.5 There is a request for a contribution to public transport required in line with Supplementary Planning Document 'Public Transport Improvements and Developer Contributions'. The contribution requested for this development is £223,298. There is also a request to pay £3,750 towards monitoring of the Green Travel Plan. The existing approval on the site which was extended last year requested a payment of £170,000 to cover public transport improvements and monitoring of green travel plan. The developer is only willing to pay this £170,000 for both as they state the scheme would not be viable with the additional contribution required. **Members views on this reduction in contributions to public transport and the green travel plan are requested.**

4. Design and visual amenity

- 10.6 The existing building to the front of the site is three storey and constructed from red brick. There was previously a clock tower on this building which was removed in 2005 as it was unsafe. This existing building presents a good quality building which faces onto Bridge Road and has a presence in the street scene. The other buildings on the site behind this frontage are constructed from a range of materials and their design does not provide positive presence in the street scene.
- 10.7 The proposed scheme involves the demolition of all these buildings. The proposal offers a two storey building constructed from red brick and glazing with a slate roof facing onto Bridge Road. This building is set in line with the road network. This building takes on board the local area in terms of the use of red brick and a design and scale that matches housing that is present in the area. The glazing elements provide a modern element to the frontage. This block has two frontages onto Bridge Road and the car park at the rear and the retail development therefore provides a active frontage on these two elevations
- 10.8 The second building on the front will be one retail user who will be an anchor tenant for the development. The building will be constructed from re-constituted stone and glazing on the front elevation which will return round onto both side elevations. The building will be a two storey height similar to the other building which fronts onto Bridge Road. The building is modern in appearance but uses re-constituted stone with stone being used in the surrounding area. This building is not in line with the road and is angled into the site. This angle allows for the other frontage building to be seen and opens up the front to views into the development. The side of this building will be visible in the street scene and is designed using materials present in the area. This set back also facilitates the opening up of a public area.
- 10.9 Behind this anchor building will be a row of retail units. The frontage is onto the proposed car park with the back for servicing being along the River Aire. These buildings are two storey in scale with brick and glazing on the elevation facing the car park. These materials tie this row to the main building on the front elevation. The glazing elements vary in design along the row which introduces variety and breaks up the row of retail units. To the rear facing the River the materials are the same bricks with composite cladding. The road leaving the site goes to the rear of this elevation but here green walls are proposed which will help to shield the service areas and vehicles from views leaving the development and across the River Aire. There is also extensive planting on the bank of the River on this side which will help to shield the rear elevation from views out of the site.
- 10.10 The final building is the large anchor building to the rear of the site. One half of this building will house the existing BHS store and the other half another retail occupier. This building will be two storey in scale and will match the front anchor building using glazing and reconstituted stone on the front elevation which wraps round to cover part of the side elevations. The rest of the two side elevations and the rear elevation will be red brick and glazing to match the other buildings on the development. Servicing for this store will be to the rear which will be shielded from any views by extensive landscaping just outside of the boundary of the development.

Overall the design of the building are considered acceptable by officers. **Members views are requested on the proposed layout and design.**

5. Landscaping and ecology

- 10.11 The proposal involves little additional landscaping within the development. There are a number of trees proposed scattered throughout the proposed car park. The aim is to provide high quality mature trees throughout the development rather than a larger number of smaller trees which take time to provide a presence. The applicant is looking to plant more trees outside of the application site on land not owned by the applicant. Discussions are continuing between the applicant and these landowners regarding supplementary planting and maintenance. As these sites are outside of the land ownership conditions cannot be attached to achieve this planting and maintenance and the scheme must be considered in the absence of this planting.
- 10.12 There is an area of TPO trees to the rear of the site on the boundary with Mill Race. Within this area the loss of 3 trees is proposed which have been deemed to add little value to the group of TPO trees and are dead/dying and diseased.
- 10.13 On the boundary with Abbey Mills the intention is to retain most of the trees on this boundary. The land beyond is owned by Leeds City Council and the developer is having discussions with Estate officers to do more planting within this area which will help to soften the development.
- 10.14 On the boundary with the River Aire there is a proposal for significant tree removal to facilitate the development. There is concern regarding the removal on this elevation and officers have requested additional information regarding this matter before this tree removal can be supported by officers.
- 10.15 The Councils ecologist is concerned regarding the proposed works along this River boundary and has requested an otter survey to be submitted which we are awaiting.

Members may wish to comment on this element of the proposal.

6. Boundary Treatments and Flood Walls

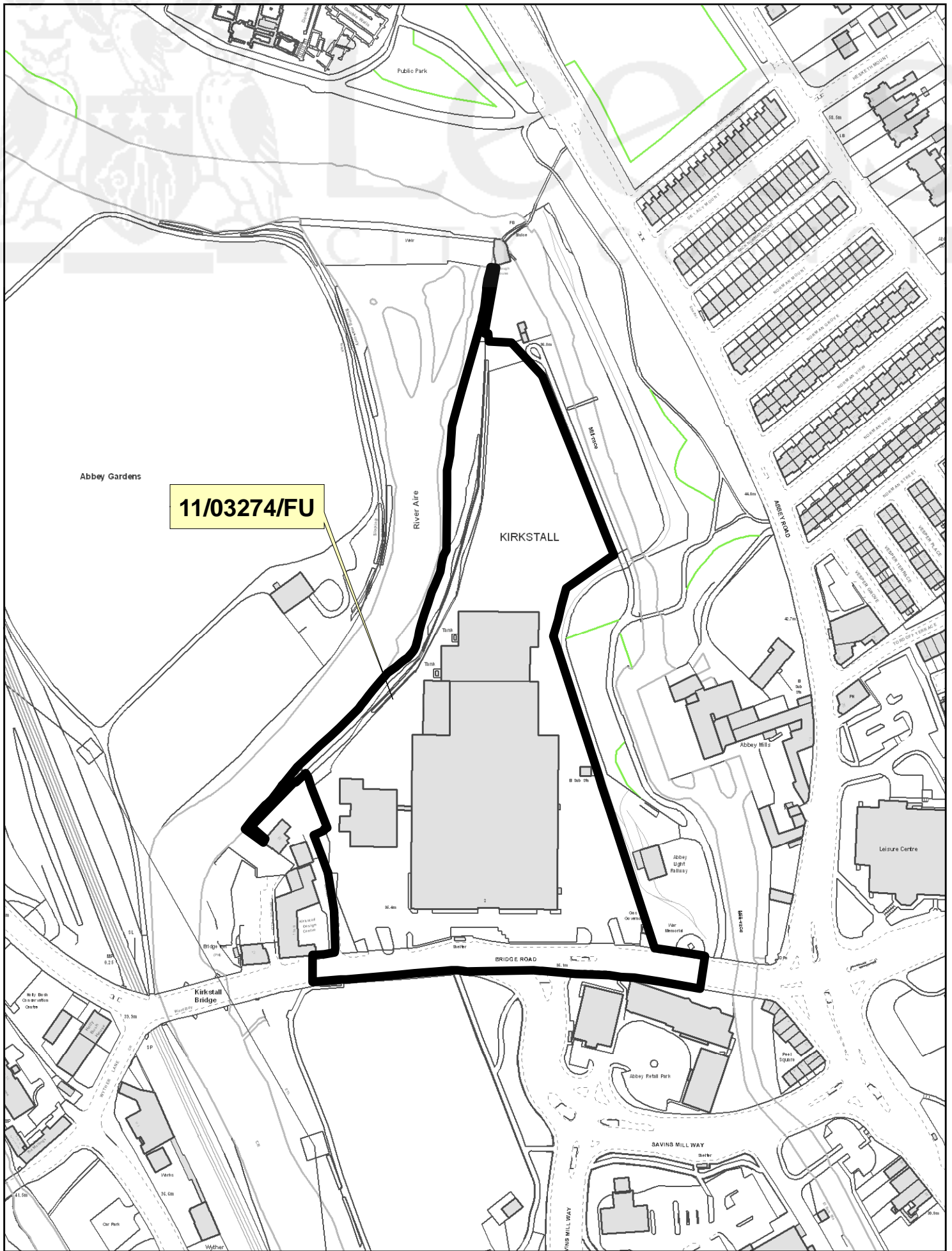
- 10.16 The site has the River Aire on the western side of the site and a subsidiary known as Mill Race/Kirkstall Goit on the eastern side of the site.
- 10.17 On the boundary with the River Aire there is an existing embankment which prevents flooding of the site from the River Aire. This development will involve digging out of the embankment on the side of the development. A new retaining wall will be constructed along this boundary which the Environment Agency support. There is concern regarding of the impact of this embankment removal on the existing trees and wildlife and further information has been requested for assessment.
- 10.18 On the opposite side of the site along the Mill Race there is a small wall required approx. 300mm in height which is acceptable to the Environment Agency and will not have an impact on the boundary visually.
- 10.19 The boundary treatment for the eastern side along the Mill Race will be a 1.5m high in total fence above the proposed flood wall. This will extend along this boundary to the proposed access to the Abbey Mills over the existing railway line. This fence will allow views out of the site to the trees and landscaping within the Abbey Mills complex but provide security.

- 10.20 The rest of this eastern boundary will be a 2.2 m (in total) weldmesh fence on top of the flood wall. This boundary treatment will be shielded from views as it is alongside the new BHS building and its servicing access and servicing car park. As the fence is weldmesh it will also allow views out of the site.
- 10.21 On the northern part of the site there is a 2.5 metres acoustics fence with climbing plants. This will not be seen from general views but is required as there is a residential property beyond this boundary.
- 10.22 Along the western side along the River Aire will be a 2 metre high weldmesh fence. This will be open and allow views into and out of the site and will offer security for the development.
- 10.23 Overall the proposed boundary treatments are acceptable but more information is required regarding the works along the embankment of the River Aire before officers can comment on the flood walls. Members may wish to comment on the measures proposed to prevent flooding and the boundary treatment.

11.0 **CONCLUSION**

The application is for a retail development on the site of the existing BHS. Members may wish to comment on the application especially in relation to

Principle of development
Highway safety and car parking
Public transport and travel plan contributions
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WEST PLANS PANEL