



Report of the Chief Planning Officer

CITY PLANS PANEL

Date: 27th SEPTEMBER 2012

Subject: PRE-APPLICATION PRESENTATION OF PROPOSED REDEVELOPMENT TO FORM 9-17 STOREY STUDENT ACCOMMODATION BUILDING, WITH GROUND FLOOR CAFÉ AND A3 USE, AT JUNCTION OF CROPPER GATE, WESTGATE AND WELLINGTON STREET, LEEDS (PREAPP/12/00421).

Electoral Wards Affected:

City and Hunslet

No

Specific Implications For:

Equality and Diversity

Community Cohesion

Narrowing the Gap

RECOMMENDATION: This report is brought to Plans Panel for information. The Developer will present the details of the scheme to allow Members to consider and comment on the proposals.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This presentation is intended to inform Members of the emerging proposals for a new building primarily containing student accommodation on a derelict but prominent site close to the intersection of Wellington Street and the A58M. A planning application is expected to be submitted later in the year.

2.0 SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

2.1 Cropper Gate is located to the east of the junction of Wellington Street and the elevated Inner Ring Road (A58M), to the west side of the city centre. The existing 3 storey buildings, comprising Bridge House and Compton House, have been vacant for a considerable period and detract from the appearance of the area. Similarly, the immediate periphery of the site is hard surfaced with no features of any quality.

2.2 Buildings immediately to the north-east are a similar size to those at Cropper Gate. Further east (for example at West One), and to the south of Wellington Street

(including the Crowne Plaza hotel and Yorkshire Post), buildings are typically much larger. Nearby properties are primarily in office uses together with commercial uses, including hotels.

- 2.3 The combination of the intersection of the major roads, the topography of the area, and the position towards the western fringe of the city centre make this a highly prominent location at a key gateway into the city centre.

3.0 PLANNING HISTORY

- 3.1 There has been a long history of planning permission on this site although this has not been followed by any subsequent building activity. Outline permission was granted in 2001 for a 6 storey office block (20/400/01/OT). In 2002 permission was granted for a 12 storey retail and office development (20/153/02/OT). Planning permission was then granted in 2004 (20/460/02/FU) for a part 9 and part 22 storey block of flats with offices and A3 at ground floor over a basement car park. This permission was subsequently amended by approval in 2004 for a 10-28 storey building (20/283/04/FU) containing 266 flats, and then in 2005 (20/207/05/FU) for 272 flats. This latter permission was extended by a planning permission granted in 2011(10/03459/EXT).
- 3.2 Pre-application discussion commenced regarding the current scheme earlier this year.

4.0 POLICY OVERVIEW

- 4.1 The site is located in the Prime Office Quarter in the Unitary Development Plan (Review). Whilst the principal (office) use is encouraged other uses which add variety in land use, urban form and function, and contribute to the vitality of the city centre are supported, provided they do not prejudice the main use (CC27).
- 4.2 All new buildings should be of high quality and have regard to character and appearance of surroundings (N13 and BD2). Development at gateway locations should be at an appropriate scale and design quality (CC4).
- 4.3 The Tall Buildings Design Guide (April 2010) provides design guidance on the acceptable location, form and appearance of tall buildings. The guide identifies the site at the convergence of areas where there is opportunity for a string of tall buildings and also as a gateway location.

5.0 PROPOSAL

- 5.1 The current proposals identify an “L”-shaped building rising from the two wings to a 17 storey tower at their junction. The northern wing comprises a primarily rectangular block which would step down to 11 and 9 storeys with a simple roof profile, uncluttered by any plant which would be concealed elsewhere on the building.
- 5.2 The southern limb, projecting at a tangent to Wellington Street, incorporates a series of stepped planes helping the building to address the corner. The southern end of this part of the building would be 15 storeys in height rising to 16 storeys towards the tower. In total, these upper levels would accommodate 506 student bedrooms.
- 5.3 The base of the building is represented by a podium incorporating facilities for students including a laundry, gymnasium and secure parking for 60 bicycles. 4

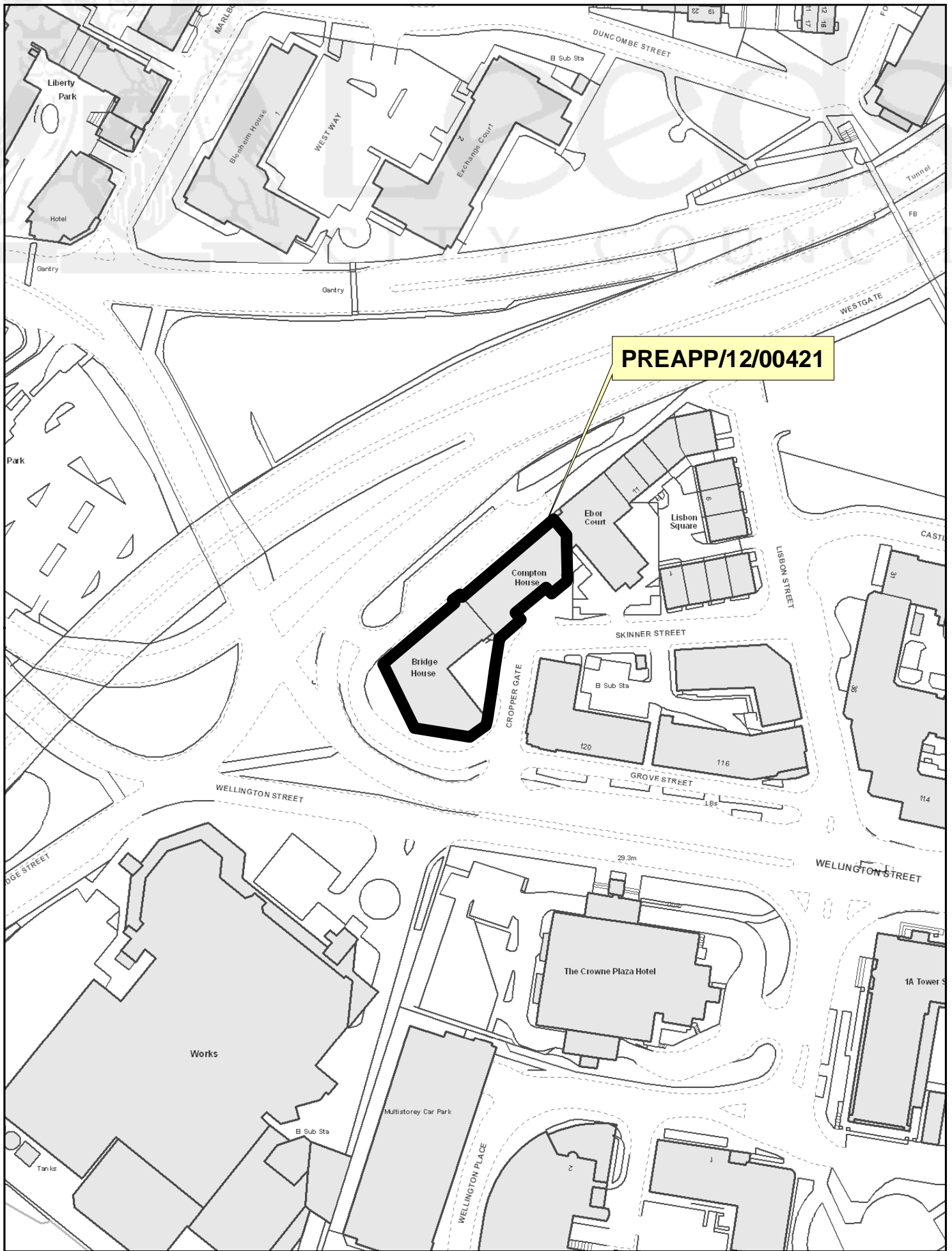
covered parking spaces are identified, including 3 disabled persons parking spaces accessed from Cropper Gate. An A3 unit and internet café are included in the southern half of the building fronting Wellington Street.

- 5.4 A light-coloured metallic rainscreen product is proposed for the podium and tower elements of the structure. The wings of the building would be faced in a red masonry rainscreen type product.
- 5.5 The upper storeys of the building are ordered by 3 storey vertical window elements. A void would be formed at the top of the tower to present a permeable termination to the building.
- 5.6 Given the proximity to major roads the building will need to be designed to incorporate measures to ensure suitable living conditions are provided for occupiers in terms of noise and air quality. The planning application will also need to be accompanied by a wind study.

6.0 ISSUES

Members are asked to comment on the scheme in respect of:

- (i) The scale and massing of the building and how it responds to its prominent location;
- (ii) The design of the building and proposed materials needing to be high quality in this prominent and highly prestigious location;
- (iii) The need for any plant to be discreetly incorporated in the built form of the building;
- (iv) The suitability of the servicing proposals for both commercial uses and also the start/end of term for students;
- (v) The need for appropriate treatment of public realm to provide an appropriate setting for the building and/or a contribution to compensate for the absence of amenity space on site;
- (vi) The need for any application to include detailed consideration of the impact of the development on the local wind environment.



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