



Report of the Chief Planning Officer

CITY PLANS PANEL

Date: 25 October 2012

Subject: LAND OFF SOVEREIGN STREET, LEEDS LS1

12/04017/LA CHANGE OF USE FROM CAR PARK TO PUBLIC REALM AND AMENITY SPACE, TO INCLUDE PAVING, WATER FEATURE, DRAINAGE, EXTERIOR LIGHTING AND ASSOCIATED SOFT LANDSCAPING WORKS – POSITION STATEMENT

APPLICANT

Leeds City Council

DATE VALID

20 September 2012

TARGET DATE

20 December 2012

Electoral Wards Affected:

City and Hunslet

Yes

Ward Members consulted
(referred to in report)

Specific Implications For:

Equality and Diversity

Community Cohesion

Narrowing the Gap

RECOMMENDATION: For Members to note the content of the report and to provide feedback on the questions posed at section 11.0 of this report.

1.0 INTRODUCTION:

1.1 This application is brought to Plans Panel as it is a significant major application for new public greenspace in the City Centre, to be delivered alongside proposals for a new office building at the Sovereign Street site (see application reference 12/04018/FU Position Statement also on this City Plans Panel Agenda).

1.2 At Plans Panel (City Centre) 5 July 2012, the applicant presented the emerging greenspace proposal at pre-application stage. Members expressed general support for the proposed greenspace and enhanced pedestrian connections, and made comments regarding the balance of hard and soft landscaping, the nature of the proposed planting, the nature and management of any proposed water feature, the relationship to the proposed KPMG office building and other future building plots on the Sovereign Street site, and the maintenance of the greenspace. The detailed scheme design has now been

submitted as a full planning application, and is described below. Members are requested to give comment on the progress of this application, which if acceptable, would be delivered in parallel with the office building to enable the first new prestige office building and the first new urban greenspace to be provided in Leeds City Centre in recent years.

2.0 PROPOSAL:

- 2.1.1 The proposal is for a new public greenspace. A number of documents have been submitted in support of this proposal:
- Scaled Plans including planting plans
 - Design and Access Statement including outline management schedules, water feature technical note and water feature maintenance checklist
 - Landscape Management and Maintenance Plan
 - Arboricultural Report
 - Lighting Study
 - Flood Risk Assessment
 - Sustainable Drainage Statement
 - Land Contamination Report
 - Archaeological Assessment
 - Statement of Community Involvement
- 2.1.2 The greenspace proposal is for the creation of over 0.5 hectares of new, high quality greenspace at the Council owned Sovereign Street site. This concept was developed following from the 2008 City Centre Vision Conference, which highlighted a lack of greenspace in the City Centre.
- 2.1.3 As a result, the Council gave consideration to how it could bring forward high quality greenspaces in the City Centre. The response was two-fold: firstly a long term proposal for the creation of a new City Centre Park in the Leeds South Bank area, which is now encapsulated in a Planning Statement for that area; and a proposal for the site at Sovereign Street to deliver an innovative and well designed environment in a prime area of the city, that would be a forerunner and complementary to the South Bank and City Centre Park proposals.
- 2.1.4 Following Executive Board's rejection of the Criterion Place development for Sovereign Street in July 2008, the Council produced an updated Planning Statement to guide the sites development proposals. This Statement was approved by Executive Board in July 2011. It promotes the site's potential to introduce the first new component of high quality greenspace as part of the greening of the City Centre southwards towards the River Aire. The indicative plan from the Planning Statement showing how the wider site could be developed is attached at the Appendix to this report (Plan 1 – Sovereign Street Site Development Framework).
- 2.1.5 In addition, stakeholder discussions on the greenspace design considered that the space should be:
- Extroverted i.e. the proposals are not restrained by the sites physical boundary;
 - A tranquil space, an escape from the noise and hustle of a busy City Centre;
 - A '21st Century Park Square'

2.2 The Scheme Design

When all of the development plots are included on the site, the area scheme would be divided into 5 character areas (see attached Plan 2 General Arrangement RF12-065L02):

- 2.2.1 Character area A – The Raingarden would form a green pedestrian boulevard between Plot B and the BT building, leading from the Viaduct Plaza to the Grove, and then southwards onto Sovereign Square. This would aim to give a lush green environment with planting of varying textures, colour and movement, managed to give year round interest. Planting would include herbaceous perennials and grasses planted in linear swathes, with two rows of River Birch, Sweet Gum, and Bird Cherry trees (19 new trees in total) to give vertical structure. This area would also form the landscaped setting for the ground floor active frontages to building plot B.
- 2.2.2 Character area B – The Grove would consist of a group of 8 trees, a mix of Himalyan Birch and False Acacia. This would form a secondary element to the main green boulevard formed by the Raingarden.
- 2.2.3 Character area C – Sovereign Square would be a central focal square that would form the main area enclosed by Plots A, B and C. This area would be the central gathering/seating space within the greenspace. Opportunities to sit, work, relax and socialise would be provided through raised grass areas and seats. Planters containing a similar planting palate to the Raingarden of hardy grasses and herbaceous perennials, and 8 new trees (7 Field Maples, and 1 Pin Oak feature tree at the south west corner) would bring shade, provide a back drop to the area, and frame the buildings. The rill would divert into the square, providing a visual connection through the different character areas. Seating along the rill would also be provided. An entrance to the plot A KPMG office building would form once edge to the square, with an active ground floor use forming the opposite edge to plot C. The north east façade of the KPMG building has been designed to complement the greenspace, and vice versa.
- 2.2.4 Character area D – Swinegate Link - the area between Plot C and the multi-storey car park/Bibi's restaurant. This area through Bibi's could provide the opportunity to have formal sitting out, eating space. In addition it provides a strong east-west link which will be enhanced by a strong tree-lined route from and to the central focal area.
- 2.2.5 Character area E – Viaduct Plaza and The Rill Water Feature - the area from Plot B up to the railway arches. This space allows for the re-use of the railway arches with active food and drink uses, with potential for external tables and chairs. Vehicular access would be maintained to the car parking in the arches below City house. Six new trees would form a small grove to the north of Plot B, and would consist of Himalyan Birch and False Acacia. The 'source' of the rill water feature, known as a water scrim, would begin at this point, and flow southwards along the edge of Sovereign Square. The scrim would feature a series of water jets set within a textured paved surface. The jets would create a number of different effects such as fountain projections, dancing sequences and mist.
- 2.2.6 Paving materials would be similar to those used at City Square and through the pedestrian streets such as Briggate and Albion Street. This would be to ensure that the palette of materials used in the City Centre is consistent from space to space. This would include Yorkstone.
- 2.2.7 Lighting of the space is also proposed to provide a variety of lighting techniques to the main routes through the space. This would provide security to those walking to and through the greenspace at night. The rill water feature would also be lit by LEDs.
- 2.2.8 Details of the management and maintenance of the water feature have been provided. This would be carried out by Leeds City Council Parks and Countryside and a specialist water feature management team.

2.2.9 There is an opportunity for public art within the greenspace. This could be in the form of a permanent sculpture or in the form of exhibitions within the area at certain times but would be subject to further discussions. This matter could be controlled by condition.

2.3 Phasing of the works

2.3.1 It is currently proposed that most of the works within the application boundary would be delivered alongside the construction of the KPMG building. Temporary landscaping may be required to building plots B and C where permanent development proposals are not at such an advanced stage. This would include the introduction of a wild flower meadow on Plot B, and the retention of car parking to Plot C until it is developed. A temporary interface with each plot will be required, and the design and access statement indicates that this could include a tree nursery for street trees, to be transplanted elsewhere at an appropriate time. The phasing of the works would be dependent on the stage of the development process reached for plots B and/or C. The Council's Director of City Development intends to report regarding the disposal of Plot C to November Executive Board.

2.4 The wider masterplan

Connections to the surrounding area is considered to be important. It is understood that these could form a later phase of works in the area, but they are not included in this planning application:

- 2.4.1 The expansion of the central focal area across Sovereign Street towards Sovereign House, using a continuation of paving materials to create a 'raised platform' across the roadway to give increased pedestrian priority and an expanded public realm treatment.
- 2.4.2 The removal of the existing paving and roadway along Pitt Row and its replacement with the paving materials consistent with the new greenspace materials. This area has the potential to provide the strong sense of arrival. The opportunity to provide a shared vehicle/pedestrian space using the same paving materials as the greenspace is being explored. This route would also be defined by a strong tree line.
- 2.4.3 The opening up of the pedestrian route along Sovereign Place by removing the walled area that forms external seating space, attached to the back of the BT building.
- 2.4.4 The potential re-opening up of the route underneath the railway arches to connect through to Bishopgate Street/Mill Hill, Boar Lane and the new Trinity Shopping Centre, in conjunction with Network Rail.

3.0 SITE AND SURROUNDINGS:

3.1 The surrounding area comprises a mixture of uses including multi-storey car parking, residential, offices, hotel and supporting restaurant and retail uses. The site is allocated as a development site in the adopted Unitary Development Plan Review (UDP) as Proposal Area 21, which forms part of the designated Riverside Area. The site extends to 1.16 hectares (2.86 acres) and is predominantly level except for a strip in front of the railway arches to the north, which is at a lower level. It is currently a surface car park, with some boundary tree planting to Sovereign Street and a low boundary fence. At the north east corner of the site is a metal clad multi-storey car park with ground floor restaurant use. At the north west corner is an early 2000s office building. To the west lies Granary Wharf and Holbeck Urban Village, with the proposed Station Southern Access located above the River Aire

with connections from the east and west. To the south of Sovereign Street a number of Victorian mill buildings, including the Grade II listed 4 The Embankment, and more recent infill developments of a complementary scale, provide enclosure to the street and to the river behind. To the east lies the City Centre Conservation Area, where its boundary cuts across Swinegate. Further south lies the River Aire, with potential for a bridge connection to the South Bank and the future City Centre Park. The site is identified in the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment in flood risk zone 3, however, more detailed topographical surveys have indicated that the site lies within zone 2.

- 3.2 There are 34 semi-mature trees along the southern edge of the site. These consist of 33 Norway Maples and 1 Cherry tree. The arboricultural report states that whilst the trees are in generally good condition, the conditions of the roots are poor due to the compacted rubble around them on the hardstanding car park.

4.0 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY:

- 4.1 The Sovereign Street site has been identified as a development site since the early 1990s, and in 1995 Leeds Development Corporation granted planning permission for a large mixed use development, of which only the multi-storey car park was built. The adoption of the UDP in 2001, and its review in 2006, formalised the site's allocation as a development site in the statutory development plan. In 2002 an informal Planning and Development Brief was adopted for the site, which led to the pre-application discussions with Simons Estates and Ian Simpson Architects regarding the 'Kissing Towers' mixed use scheme between 2003-2007, however no planning application was submitted for that scheme. Following the cancellation of that scheme, the site was identified by the Council's Executive Board as a potential site for new buildings and a greenspace, and following public consultation in 2011, a revised Sovereign Street Planning Statement incorporating that vision was adopted. Plans Panel (City Centre) discussed the updated Sovereign Street Planning Statement in March and October 2011, and Members were generally supportive of its aims.

5.0 HISTORY OF NEGOTIATIONS:

- 5.1.1 The applicant presented the proposals for the greenspace to Members as a pre-application presentation at Plans Panel (City Centre) on 5 July 2012. Members raised the following comments (*with the applicant's response at Panel in brackets*):
- Clarification as to why water fountains had been omitted from the proposals (*The applicant confirmed that the concept of water would be explored, including water jets*)
 - The need for the applicant to look at introducing a water feature that worked (*The applicant confirmed that they would look at a fairly simple quality water feature within the scheme which would be reliable and would be sustainable within the budget*)
 - The importance of employing people with the relevant qualifications to maintain water features within the city. Clarification if discussions had been undertaken with Parks and Countryside with regards to the park and whether those staff who achieved gold status at the Chelsea Flower show had been consulted on the proposals (*The applicant confirmed that discussions had taken place with Parks and Countryside and that officers with the relevant Chelsea experience were on the Project Board*)
 - The view expressed that Park Square was an excellent and desirable area for public seating, but that in some thoroughfare areas i.e. Trevelyn Square there was no public seating and of the fact that Leeds should be adopting a 'café

culture' in all future city planning applications (*The applicant stated that the use of more kiosks in thoroughfare areas was not ruled out and that they would also allow a range of other uses in such public areas*)

- The view expressed that there should be enough greenspace for people to enjoy and that sustainability was the key
- Clarification if wind modelling had been undertaken for recreational spaces (*The applicant stated that wind modelling was more applicable around buildings, but tree planting would help to mitigate any potential adverse impact*)
- The need for more greenspace to be evident with less hard standing connectivity and servicing requirements
- The possibility of opening up the route of the goit
- Clarification of how deep the goit would be on a rainy day
- Clarification if the goit was a cut off the River Aire and for this element to be addressed when the application comes back for determination
- A desire for the scheme to be a new greenspace and not a concrete space
- Clarification if Leeds City Council would be taking on the management of the greenspace and the need for a clear accountability procedure to be in place (*The applicant confirmed that Leeds City Council would be responsible for the management of the greenspace and would put in appropriate measures to manage the process effectively*)
- Clarification of the timing of the proposals in relation to plot C and that this should be kept as a greenspace and the paths connecting to plot C should not be put in until it was developed
- Clarification of what consultations had been undertaken to date and the need for more people and business users to be provided with a place of tranquility in the city (*The applicant confirmed that consultation was undertaken in relation to a planning brief for the site which was adopted last summer and that all the respondents to this would be replied to as part of the comprehensive consultation programme*)
- The need for more work to be undertaken to address the deficiency of greenspace provision in the city centre, particularly in view of the growing residential population
- Clarification of the landscaping design and the need to compliment the structure of the scheme with appropriate planting i.e. pleached trees etc
- The need to re-examine the goit that comes off the River Aire as opposed to an artificial route
- The need to look at architectural planting to mirror the image of the city and not to plant 'lollipop' trees
- The need to encourage more of a café culture in Leeds and to think more like a European culture
- The need to explore the extent of all service routes in order to reduce the impact on the greenspace
- The need for Elected Members to be kept informed throughout the process
- The need to acknowledge that greenspace in relation to surrounding areas was a very important issue
- The need to ensure that there was a proper functioning relationship in place around future equipment maintenance for those bringing forward the formal planning application
- The need for the scheme to be more strategic and to address the future challenges
- The need to plant the appropriate species of tree i.e. hornbeam etc, but not yew trees
- The need to complement the plans for building plot A and to engage into a dialogue with the people who had been responsible for the design of plot A

5.1.2 Members resolved that the report and pre-application presentation be noted, and that in view of this being an emerging proposal, the Panel confirmed their support for the broad concept for the greenspace and proposals for enhanced connections.

6.0 PUBLIC/LOCAL RESPONSE:

6.1 Application publicity consisted of:

6.1.1 Site Notice: Notice of Proposed Major Development affecting the character of a conservation area and the setting of a listed building, posted 5 October 2012, expiry 26 October 2012.

6.1.2 Press Notice: Notice of Proposed Major Development affecting the character of a conservation area and the setting of a listed building published 4 October 2012, expiry 25 October 2012.

6.2 City and Hunslet Ward Members consulted 24 September 2012 and 25 September 2012: No comments received at time of writing.

6.2 Leeds Waterfront Association consulted 25 September 2012: No comments received at time of writing.

6.3 Leeds Civic Trust consulted 25 September 2012. Expression of strong support received 12 October 2012 setting out the following comments :

6.3.1 Leeds Civic Trust were pleased that the landscape architects have picked up so many of the points they raised at pre-application stage in July and resolved them in creating plans for an urban space of real distinction. If delivered and maintained on the lines envisaged in the planning application and supporting material, we will have a city centre greenspace worthy of our European aspirations.

6.3.2 They were pleased to see the higher proportion of grass and the fact that this is not to be 'cut up' by desire line paths.

6.3.3 They welcome the introduction of water and note that it is now a little more subtle and does not reduce the extent of the grass area – our only concern is still that safety concerns might 'water down' this aspect.

6.3.4 They felt this might be an opportunity to provide features which children would find attractive and so welcome the 'play pool' – some sculpture to climb over might be a further addition in this area.

6.3.5 They like the way the seating is incorporated into the lawn edging and rill but we did discuss the potential for some seats to be arranged in such a way as to encourage interaction – not all lined up around the edge looking away from others.

6.3.6 Management will obviously be an issue – if it is intended that it will become part of the city centre public realm maintained by the City Council, care will need to be taken that this area is not forgotten in the same way as parts of the waterfront are now.

6.3.7 Outside the area of the current planning application, we do have some further concerns:

- Pitt Row forms a significant part of the public realm and we feel that it should be paved over in the same way as Briggate or the retail area precincts – vehicles can pass over relevant areas giving way to pedestrians.
- they feel that further consideration should be given to the role and route of the Loop as it affects the development site – there could be arguments for moving the Loop from Swinegate to Sovereign Street/Neville Street so as to enhance links between the retail area and the site, and we understand that there are proposals regarding putting buses back on Sovereign Street.
- they note that the wider scheme suggests temporary uses for plots B (wildflower meadow) and C (car park) and we have no issues with the options suggested.
- plans suggest that all existing trees around the former Queens Hall site will be removed and new trees planted – in view of the fact that they could be damaged by building work, would it be more sensible to retain the existing trees around plot C until this element is complete, so maintaining the ‘green’ feel of this part of the site.
- they appreciate that funding will be an issue but it is essential to factor in the need to provide a bridge link to the South Bank somewhere in this area – is it intended *that funding could be generated by the development of blocks B and C?*

6.4 Comment in support of the application proposal posted on Leeds City Council website on 8 October 2012 by Mr. W. Smith, Ilkley: The proposal is a fantastic use of space that will, along with the KPMG building, act as a catalyst to further development in the area, hopefully creating a high quality business district such as the Spinningfields area of Manchester, and that the space must be versatile and useable for various uses as well as improving the pedestrian access around the area. Mr. Smith is of the view that this application achieves that and accordingly should be approved by the planning committee.

7.0 CONSULTATIONS RESPONSES:

7.1 Statutory:

7.1.1 Highways Agency: No objection.

7.1.2 Network Rail: No objection in principle to the proposals, however Network Rail have concerns that the proposals do not take account of access rights to their property. Network Rail direct that all surface and foul drainage arising from the proposed works must be collected and diverted away from Network Rail property and any soakaways must be located away from railway infrastructure. They also direct that all roads and paths providing access to any part of the railway undertaker’s land shall be kept open at all times during and after the development.

7.1.3 Leeds City Council Transport Development Services: No objections subject to the provision of details of :

- short stay cycle parking
- the pedestrian route at the north-west corner of the site
- the vehicular access to the City House car park in the arches
- the phasing and delivery of improvements to Pitt Row

7.1.4 Environment Agency: no objection subject to specified conditions to ensure the development is carried out in accordance with the submitted flood risk assessment (FRA).

7.1.5 Canal and Rivers Trust: No objection

7.1.6 Yorkshire Water: No comments at time of writing

7.2 Non-statutory:

7.2.1 West Yorkshire Archaeology Advisory Service: No comments at time of writing

7.2.2 Leeds City Council Flood Risk Management: No objection subject to implementation of development in accordance with the submitted FRA. Conditions are recommended regarding surface water drainage details, and that the culvert that runs through the site should be investigated/surveyed and details submitted to the Local Planning Authority. The project design should incorporate measures to allow for maintenance of the culvert and details should be submitted showing how this will be protected during construction.

8.0 PLANNING POLICIES:

8.1 The development plan includes the Regional Spatial Strategy to 2026 (RSS) and the adopted Leeds Unitary Development Plan (Review 2006) (UDP) along with relevant supplementary planning guidance and documents. The Local Development Framework will eventually replace the UDP but at the moment this is still undergoing production with the Core Strategy still being at the draft stage. The RSS was issued in May 2008 and includes a broad development strategy for the region, setting out regional priorities in terms of location and scale of development.

8.2 Development Plan

Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) (adopted May 2008):

YH1: Spatial pattern of development and core approach.

YH2: Sustainable development

YH4: focus development on regional cities.

YH5: Focus development on principal towns.

YH7: location of development.

LCR1: Leeds City Region sub area policy.

LCR2: regionally significant investment priorities, Leeds City Region.

Leeds Unitary Development Plan Review 2006

Relevant policies include:

GP5 all relevant planning considerations

GP11 sustainability

GP12 sustainability

A1 improving access for all

A4 safety and security provision

N12 urban design

N25 boundary treatments

N29 archaeology

ARC6 archaeology

CC1 City Centre and planning obligations

CC3 City Centre character

CC11 streets and pedestrian corridors

CC12 public space and connectivity

CC13 public spaces and design criteria

Policy CC28 Riverside Quarter

Proposal Area 21 Statement

T2 transport provision for new development
T6 provision for the disabled
LD1 landscaping
N38A development and flood risk
N38B planning applications and flood risk assessments
N39A sustainable drainage systems
N27 Temporary landscaping of cleared sites

8.2 Relevant Supplementary Planning Guidance includes:

SPD Sustainable Drainage
SPD Sustainable Design and Construction
City Centre Urban Design Strategy
Sovereign Street Planning Statement 2011

8.3 National Planning Policy Framework

8.3.1 The NPPF includes policy guidance on sustainable development, economic growth, transport, design, and climate change.

8.4 Relevant National Planning Policy Practice Guides

PPS25 Practice Guide

9.0 MAIN ISSUES

1. Principle of use
2. Landscape and urban design principles
3. Access
4. Flood risk
5. Sustainability

10.0 APPRAISAL

10.1 Principle of use

10.1.1 The application site lies within the designated City Centre, and is identified as a site for a major mixed use development under Policy CC28 of the UDPR, and the Riverside Quarter Proposal Area 21. This objective was carried forward through the Sovereign Street Planning Statement 2011, which identified an indicative layout including 3 new buildings with a central green public space.

10.1.2 The National Planning Policy Framework advocates a presumption in favour of sustainable development, including the development of a high quality built environment, including public spaces with clear and legible pedestrian routes, that should conserve or enhance biodiversity, It is considered that in principle the proposal would achieve these aims.

10.1.3 UDPR Policy CC13 states that new public spaces must be imaginatively designed to complement their location and to ensure that they are attractive, comfortable, safe to use and accessible for all.

10.1.4 Policy CC12 states that in new development, new public spaces must be related to and connect with the existing pattern of streets, corridors and spaces, including the river and canal walkways. Paragraph 13.4.18 of the UDPR's explanatory text states that within the City Centre *'the aim is to create a network of attractive and varied*

public spaces in which the public will feel safe, comfortable, and free from crime. These spaces will contribute greatly to the lively and commercially successful City Centre. They will need to be carefully designed with great attention to detail, including appropriate planting. Lack of character or over-elaborate design must be avoided, otherwise the public will not identify with and use these spaces. Design style should reflect the character of that part of the City Centre where the space lies'. The explanatory text of UDPR Policy CC12 states that for the creation of attractive public spaces, a number of criteria should be borne in mind, including:

- the intended function of the space;
- materials, street furniture and soft landscaping elements;
- opportunities to introduce works of art;
- townscape setting;
- micro-climate;
- ease of management and maintenance;
- personal safety and mobility.

10.1.5 The Sovereign Street Planning Statement's aims for the delivery of a new greenspace for the City Centre as follows:

- the area of 0.5 - 0.6 Ha (around 40% - 50% site area) when phased over time in order to be a meaningful green public space;
- An accessible, safe and secure space which would improve connectivity within the City Centre for all users;
- Give a high quality environment which balances the passive and active recreational needs of day visitors, office workers and City Centre residents;
- Attract and facilitate the delivery of new commercial developments with a design character that helps to frame the new greenspace, and also support its financial viability;
- Enhance the reputation of Leeds and the City Centre as a liveable environment with high quality design standards;
- Add to the critical mass of the City Centre's attractions as a destination in its own right;
- Create opportunities for public art and cultural attractions;
- Create opportunities for biodiversity enhancement;
- Be designed with sustainability, climate change and flood alleviation in mind, e.g. incorporating surface run-off in greenspace design;
- Connect with the potential redevelopment of Leeds South Bank, thus improving connectivity, particularly between the north and south banks of the River Aire;
- Spur regeneration and enhance employment opportunities in the City Centre. The Leeds City Region Green Infrastructure Strategy 2010 highlights the positive relationships between the provision of green-space, health and well-being, climate change resilience, and economic growth and regeneration.

10.2 **Landscape and urban design principles**

10.2.1 The provision of green infrastructure at Sovereign Street would enhance the City Centre's commercial offer and enhance its credentials as a liveable place, by supporting local employment, community development, environmental resilience and social gain. There would be significant economic, environmental and social advantages for the City Centre as a whole in ensuring the delivery of new City Centre greenspace. It would act as a catalyst for attracting and sustaining regeneration and connectivity.

10.2.2 The landscaping of the site would be designed in a positive manner appropriate to the character of the area and the character of paving materials would accord with the

character of the emerging context of three new buildings, one of which has been designed in parallel with this greenspace proposal. It is considered that in principle the scheme would provide distinctiveness, variety, quality and visual interest in terms of its planting species, form, rhythm, paving materials, appropriate modern detailing, and water features.

10.2.3 Are Members of the view that the relative balance between hard and soft landscaping through the scheme, and the proposed palette of materials and tree species are appropriate?

10.2.4 Do Members support the proposed water feature design?

10.2.5 The hard and soft landscaped character areas and pedestrian routes within the development would be attractive and enhance the setting of the existing, proposed and future buildings, and support daytime activity in the area. The scheme would be lit at night, and the submitted lighting study states that there are opportunities to vary the style of lighting for each distinct zone of the scheme. It is considered that the proposed design would retain and reinforce the identity and distinctive character of this area, and would upgrade the physical environment to complement the proposed buildings uses.

10.2.6 Do Members support the intended uses of the different character areas?

10.2.7 The proposal would upgrade the physical environment and create a place that would enhance the character and appearance of the nearby conservation area and the setting of the nearby listed building on The Embankment. The scheme would be complementary in scale and materials, and bring out the contemporary characteristics of the new emerging context for Sovereign Street, which would eventually continue over the river onto the South Bank with development surrounding the City Centre Park proposals.

10.2.8 It is considered that the proposed public greenspace, and in time, its three companion buildings will give the Sovereign Street part of the riverside its own local identity, distinctiveness and legibility. Opportunities for more active ground floor uses in Plots B and C would be required in order to make the most of the space. This is a requirement of the adopted Sovereign Street Planning Statement.

10.2.9 Do Members support the temporary uses of Plots B and C?

10.2.10 The 33 Norway Maples and 1 Cherry that would be removed as part of the scheme proposal are considered to be visually significant, and contribute positively to the character of the streetscene, however, in terms of the fundamental nature of the proposed scheme design for both the greenspace and the KPMG office building and the introduction of north-south pedestrian routes, the trees would no longer be well-located from a landscape and urban design perspective, and their root zones would remain constrained by hardstanding and building footprints. Therefore, the scheme proposes a significant number of new trees (64 comprising 8 different species), with extensive and varied herbaceous and ornamental planting as part of a high quality comprehensively designed landscape provision for a new public greenspace in mitigation for their loss. If a high quality growing environment is provided, these will establish to provide a strong, long-term sustainable mitigation for the immediate loss of the existing trees. In contrast to the existing trees which are largely single species, new planting will also allow for a greater variety of species, with added visual amenity and biodiversity benefits as a result.

10.2.11 Do Members have any comments regarding the comprehensive approach to tree replacement within the proposed greenspace planting design ?

10.3 Highways and access

10.3.1 The Sovereign Square proposal should be accessible, safe and secure, and improve connectivity in the City Centre for all users. Discussions are in progress regarding the following detailed matters:

- provision of short stay cycle parking
- the pedestrian route at the north-west corner of the site
- the vehicular access to the City House car park in the arches
- the phasing and delivery of improvements to Pitt Row
- access arrangements from all pedestrian routes around the site, through the character areas including the grassed areas of the central square.

10.3.2 Do the proposals enable all users to pass through the scheme proposal via all main pedestrian connections and use the all aspects of the space?

10.3.3 Should the proposals include works to enhance Pitt Row?

10.4 Flood Risk

10.4.1 The measures identified in the submitted flood risk assessment have been agreed with the Environment Agency. There is currently no formal drainage to serve the hardstanding car park. It holds standing water, and flows into the public sewer network. The proposed drainage strategy uses a combination of water features and below-ground storage to collect and attenuate surface run-off. This could also incorporate the run-off from the three development plots. Whilst a new connection to the public sewer would be made, it would be a reduction to the existing flows. Further coordination of reducing volume and rate of run-off would be explored as the greenspace and building schemes evolve.

10.5 Sustainability

10.5.1 The provision of new green infrastructure would improve the quality of city centre life, enhance biodiversity, and help to counteract the heat island effect of a dense urban centre.

11.0 CONCLUSION

11.1 Members are requested to consider all the matters raised within this report in order to provide officers with appropriate comments and / or advice on the proposal. Specifically, feedback is requested from Members on:

11.1.1 Are Members of the view that the relative balance between hard and soft landscaping through the scheme, and the proposed palette of materials and tree species are appropriate?

11.1.2 Do Members support the proposed water feature design?

11.1.3 Do Members support the intended uses of the different character areas?

11.1.4 Do Members support the temporary uses of Plots B and C?

11.1.5 Do Members have any comments regarding the comprehensive approach to tree replacement within the proposed greenspace planting design ?

11.1.6 Do the proposals enable all users to pass through the scheme proposal via all main pedestrian connections and use the all aspects of the space?

11.1.7 Should the proposals include works to enhance Pitt Row?

Background Papers:

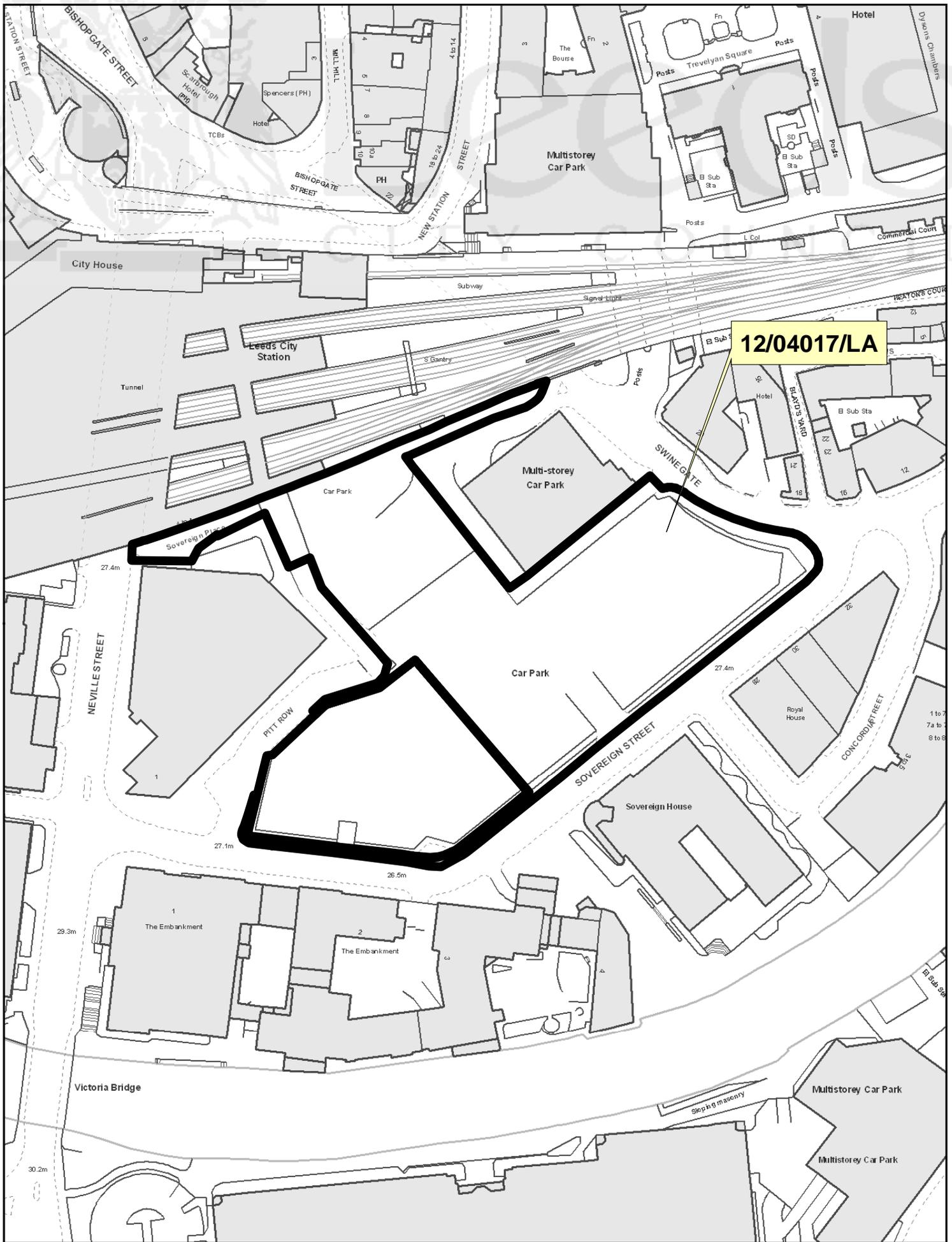
Application file 12/04017/LA

Certificate of Ownership A signed by on behalf of applicant by agent

Appendices

Plan 1 – Sovereign Street Site Development Framework (from Sovereign Street Planning Statement 2011)

Plan 2 – Proposed Site Layout General Arrangement RF12-065L02



CITY PLANS PANEL





KEY

- SITE BOUNDARY
- 5-6 DEVELOPMENT SITES
- A POSSIBLE STOREY HEIGHTS
- ← ACTIVE FRONTAGE
- URBAN GREEN SPACE (HARD + SOFT LANDSCAPE)
- OFF SITE CONNECTION FOOTWAY EDGE
- ← KEY PEDESTRIAN ROUTE
- □ □ KEY FUTURE PEDESTRIAN LINK (OPTIONS/POSSIBILITIES SHOWN)
- ● TREES ALONG STREET EDGE
- ← KEY VIEWS
- ← VEHICLE/DELIVERY ACCESS (GENERALLY TO BASEMENT PARKING)
- POSSIBLE VEHICLE LINK
- POSSIBLE DROP-OFF
- POSSIBLE OPPORTUNITY FOR BUT MULTI-STOREY + PROVIDE ARCADE
- POSSIBLE ARCADE/SHELTERED ROUTE
- RAILWAY ARCHES TO BE RE-DEVELOPED (FUTURE OPTION)
- RAILWAY ARCHES REGENERATED/IN USE

NB POSSIBLE NEW HIGHWAYS ALIGNMENT & IMPROVEMENTS FOR PEDESTRIANS ESPECIALLY AROUND SWINEGATE

NB ENCOURAGE POSITIVE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN BUILDINGS & PUBLIC REALM/CITY PARK ~ INTEGRATED USES SUSTAINABLE CHARACTERISTICS & FEATURES

OPTION 1A

SOVEREIGN STREET DEVELOPMENT SITE FRAMEWORK

INDICATIVE ONLY

building enclosure
inside railing

SCALE COMPARISON
approximate scale of Park Square, Leeds

50M approx.

~INDICATIVE DRAWING ONLY~

MB. SDU NOV 2010
 REV. APR. 2011

KEY:

- A The Raingarden
- B The Grove
- C Sovereign Square
- D Swinegate Link
- E Water feature/rill



DATE	DRAWN	DESCRIPTION OF REVISION	REVISION LETTER	CHECKED BY

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