

## CITY PLANS PANEL

THURSDAY, 25TH OCTOBER, 2012

**PRESENT:** Councillor N Taggart in the Chair

Councillors P Gruen, R Procter,  
D Blackburn, M Hamilton, S Hamilton,  
G Latty, T Leadley, J McKenna, E Nash,  
N Walshaw, J Hardy and T Murray

### 14 Late Items

Although there were no formal late items, the Panel was in receipt of the following additional information which had been provided during the site visits:

- Application 12/03402/FU – Land at Grimes Dyke – a plan showing the layout of the proposed scheme (minute 23 refers)
- Preapp 12/00749/ - White Rose Shopping Centre – a graphic showing the existing site with an overlay of the proposed development (minute 25 refers)

### 15 Chair's opening remarks

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting

### 16 Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary and Other Interests

There were no declarations made during the meeting

### 17 Apologies for Absence

The Chair noted that it would be necessary for several Members to leave the meeting before its conclusion due to their attendance at other Council meetings

### 18 Minutes

**RESOLVED** - To approve the minutes of the City Plans Panel meeting held on 27<sup>th</sup> September 2012 subject to the following amendments:

#### Minute 8 – Trinity West Shopping Centre

That ' Councillors Nash and Campbell wished it to be recorded that they voted against the recommendation and that Councillor Leadley abstained

from voting ' be amended to read ' Councillor Leadley and Councillor Campbell wished it to be recorded that they voted against the recommendation and that Councillor Nash abstained from voting'

Minute 9 – Position Statement Energy from waste facility, Cross Green Industrial Estate

That ' The view expressed that it was not suitable for laying concrete on tarmac ....' be amended to read ' The view expressed that it was not suitable for laying tarmac on concrete ...'

**19 Matters arising from the minutes**

With reference to minute 9 of the City Plans Panel meeting held on 27<sup>th</sup> September 2012, the Chief Planning Officer confirmed that the proposed visit for Panel Members to Energy from Waste facilities in Sheffield and Mansfield had been arranged for 23<sup>rd</sup> November

In relation to the same minute, the need for Legal Services to provide information to the Panel on matters which could properly be taken into account when making a decision on the application in view of a contract for the incinerator having already been signed, was reiterated

**20 Application 12/03975/FU - 6 storey data centre with car parking - land formerly Yorkshire Chemicals site - Black Bull Street LS10 - Position statement**

Further to minute 36 of the Plans Panel City Centre meeting held on 30<sup>th</sup> August 2012 where Panel considered a pre-application presentation for a data centre, Panel considered a position statement on the proposals

Plans, graphics, including night views, artist's impressions and sample materials were displayed at the meeting

Officers presented the report which related to proposals for a 6 storey data centre on land which had formed part of the Yorkshire Chemicals site

Members were informed that the site provided key connections from the proposed city park and New Dock and would provide the first phase of development of the site

The building would comprise two main data halls clad in random patterned zinc which would be linked by a glazed element; cooling plant would be sited at the top of the building. Members were informed that revisions had been made to the elevations since it was last considered by Members

In terms of connectivity, pedestrian routes from the site to the proposed city park would be provided which included a new pedestrian crossing to Crown Point Road; the upgrading of an existing crossing in the area and widening of the footway for the full length of the site. Vehicular access to the site would be from Cudbear Street. To enhance the immediate area, tree planting would be provided

The Panel was informed of an objection to the scheme which had been received from Carlsberg which related to the height of the building; the effect

of daylight and sunlight to the north; concern about wind generation; noise from the cooling plant and that the building did not respond to wider connections

Members were informed that the proposed height was similar to buildings in the area and that in respect of concerns about light, the applicant's architect would be asked to provide further information on this

Regarding wind generation, it was stated that a wind assessment had not been included in the information supporting the application as the building did not meet the criteria for providing such an assessment

In terms of noise, an assessment was being considered by the Council's Environmental Protection Team, with further information on this to be submitted

Concerning connectivity, Officers were of the view that the new and enhanced crossing points to be provided as part of the scheme would allow onward connection to the City Centre

Members commented on the following matters:

- the colour of the proposed cladding, with a mix of views on the most appropriate colour for this
- that the workshop proposed at the August meeting to discuss the scheme in depth had not been convened
- the sustainability of the building and the possible use for the heat generated by the building
- the importance of the visual appearance of the building from Black Bull Street
- concern about the absence of a wind assessment and to note that Members had raised the consequences of wind from the development and had been informed that it was the view of Officers that this was not an issue
- the quality of the zinc cladding and the need to ensure this did not change shape when it was worked
- that the comments made by Carlsberg were valid and needed to be properly considered
- that issues relating to the S106 agreement should be worked out when the application was to be determined
- the good design of the building and that it could make a contribution towards the commercial growth of Leeds
- the amount of natural light available for those people employed in the building
- the importance of ensuring the building influenced the rest of the forthcoming neighbouring development

Officers provided the following responses:

- that the revisions to the proposed colour of the cladding was a response to Members' previous views that the lighter coloured zinc cladding was too bland. On this point it was agreed that a site visit could be arranged prior to determination where large sample panels could be provided for better consideration of the colour for the cladding
- that a workshop had originally been proposed but as the scheme had been generally well supported it felt this would not be necessary and had been clarified with Members at the subsequent meeting of Panel

- that the building was aiming for a BREEAM Very Good rating and that further details on the proposals for use of the heat together with information about the levels of water recycling in the building would be obtained
- that the site was predominantly for the housing of data servers; with service engineers being employed there. Whilst noting the comments regarding the lack of windows in the scheme other than at a high level and the amount of natural light available, if windows were introduced lower down, these would be blocked due to the siting of the servers

The Panel provided the following responses to the questions posed in the report:

- that Members were of the view that the principle of locating a data centre building on part of the site was appropriate, given the potential importance of such a facility to the City Centre economy and as a catalyst for the regeneration of the South Bank
- that Members agreed that the principle of the proposed external cladding materials would be acceptable but that there was a difference of views about the colour to be used. It was noted that large on-site sample panels would be provided on a site visit
- that regarding the proposal's contribution to public open space, the need for the provision of footpath routes was accepted, particularly to New Dock. However, the cost of the delivery of these would need to be noted and if a further sum was required, consideration could be given to allocating this towards the City Park
- that Panel was satisfied on the quality of the street and landscape planting around the proposal but that Councillor Nash be consulted on the species of trees to be planted
- that Members agreed that the location and width of the pedestrian and cycle routes within the proposal would contribute to the aspirations for a well connected South Bank and City Centre Park, with new greened pedestrian and cycle routes linking across the area from Holbeck Urban Village to New Dock and beyond

**RESOLVED** - To note the report and the comments now made and that the outstanding issues relating to sustainability and other points made by Members be addressed in the report to be presented to Panel for determination of the application

**21 Application 12/04018/FU - Four storey office development with basement car parking and landscaping - Land off Sovereign Street and Pitt Row LS1 - Position statement**

Plans, graphics and sample materials were displayed at the meeting. A Members site visit had been undertaken earlier in the day

Officers presented a position statement for a four storey office development with basement car parking and landscaping on land off Sovereign Street and Pitt Row LS1, identified as site A, in the Sovereign Street Development Site Framework

Members were informed that the development was for the new Leeds Headquarters of KPMG, which if approved, would see the company relocating from their existing premises on Neville Street. The Chief Planning Officer stressed the importance to the commercial health of the city of KPMG's decision to remain in Leeds

The building would be predominantly glazed with elevations to Sovereign Street, Pitt Row and the proposed new public greenspace - Sovereign Square -. The main pedestrian access would be from Sovereign Street, with servicing off Pitt Row. As the site was within flood risk zone 2, the entrance floor level would be raised by 1 metre

A BREEAM Excellent rating was being sought for the building which would see the use of air source heat pumps and the provision of a sedum roof. In addition, solar shading would be provided through the inclusion of brise soleil and angled facades

Members were informed that in developing the site, it would be necessary to remove the 13 semi-mature Norway Maple trees and 1 Cherry Tree as whilst they were currently in good condition, their long-term future was poor as the compacted hardstanding around the trees had damaged their roots

Members discussed the proposals and commented on the following matters:

- the funding for the bridge over the River Aire and concerns that this development did not make a contribution towards it
- the possibility of saving some of the existing trees on the site
- whether glare from the building would be controlled and the possibility of light pollution from the building
- that KPMG's decision to remain in Leeds was welcomed and that it showed there was confidence in the city
- the importance of the roof top plant not detracting from the overall appearance of the building and the need for detailed information to be provided on this element as the roof of the building would be seen by occupiers of adjacent premises
- the importance of siting the correct species of trees to suit their location, with the possibility of willow trees being considered for the site if the water table was high enough
- that the building was well designed but the greenspace was problematic and that although they were two individual applications, it was difficult to separate them

Officers provided the following responses

- that Executive Board had committed the contributions from the development of site A to the adjacent greenspace and that work was being undertaken on an alternative funding mechanism for the city park and the bridge
- regarding retention of the trees, there was the possibility of some replanting on Pitt Row but realistically due to the damage sustained to the tree roots, it was more likely that replacement planting would be necessary
- that moving towards determination of the application, further technical information would be obtained regarding glare, however Members were

advised that the fins on the elevations would not be illuminated and there would be no uplighting from the building

- that further information on the design of the plant room would be sought

In response to the specific questions raised in the report, Members provided the following responses:

- Members welcomed the principle of locating a blue chip headquarters office building in this sustainable location, on a vacant, cleared site in need of regeneration
- that the footprint and massing were appropriate in the context of nearby buildings and the guidance in the Sovereign Street Planning Statement 2011
- that in respect of the proposed roof-top plant treatment, that further details were needed and that it should be taken into account that due to the height of some of the surrounding buildings, the roof of the building would be visible from some locations
- that the principle of the proposed detailed building design would be acceptable, subject to conditions requiring on-site samples, external cladding and building feature (e.g. fins and brise soleil) samples and detailed typical working drawings at construction phase
- in respect of areas of full height privacy manifestation proposed to parts of the Sovereign Street and Pitt Row elevations, further details of this was provided. Members were informed that KPMG wished to screen some of the back office functions, i.e. the post room and staff canteen but also wished for issues of commercial confidentiality, to screen the conference rooms and meeting rooms. Whilst the screening of back office functions would be towards Pitt Row which was a less sensitive location, the conference and meeting rooms would be on Sovereign Street, with concerns at the impact of this on the corner of the building. Members discussed this and were of the view that whilst there was a need to ensure appropriate security there were options available which would not necessitate blocking out a key part of the building to the detriment of its visual appearance. On this matter the Chief Planning Officer stated that it was right that this issue be looked at carefully but that in many buildings, the solution to this was a solid wall, therefore what was being proposed was better than most buildings, however the possibility to refine this would be explored
- regarding the street and landscape planting around the proposal, that further information on this would be provided; the possibility of replanting some of the existing trees could be explored and to note that Councillor Nash wished to be involved in the selection of tree species for the site
- in respect of greenspace contributions, to note the comments made and that the development should make a financial contribution in lieu of on-site landscaping and tree provision
- that Members were happy with the general approach to highways and transportation matters in relation to the site

- in respect of sustainability measures in the proposed building design, that further information, particularly around glare, be provided
- RESOLVED** - To note the report and the comments now made

**22 Application 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 - Land off Sovereign Street LS1 - Position Statement**

Further to minute 14 of the Plans Panel City Centre meeting held on 5<sup>th</sup> July 2012 where Panel received a pre-application presentation on proposals for the creation of a new green space in the city centre, Members considered a position statement on the proposals. Plans and graphics were displayed at the meeting. A Members site visit had taken place earlier in the day

Officers presented the report and stated that the intention was for most of the site to be delivered alongside the construction of the new KPMG building, although some temporary landscaping might be necessary to building plots B and C where proposals were not at an advanced stage

Members were informed that it was hoped that the development of the public amenity space and the adjoining building plots would act as a catalyst for better utilisation of the Dark Arches

The Panel discussed the proposals and commented on the following matters:

- the design of the scheme; that it contained raised areas with concerns that this was not child-friendly and also created areas where rubbish could accumulate
- the emphasis on Yorkstone for the seating; the need to consider other materials, possibly timber and to include actual seating in the scheme, rather than the raised areas which were proposed, with consideration being given to including alcoves, to allow for greater use of the space, i.e. through outdoor meetings
- disappointment that the views expressed by Members at the meeting in August had not seemed to have been taken into account and that the opportunity to design an all-encompassing inviting public space had not been taken
- the retention of raised beds in the scheme when Members had indicated they did not wish these to be included and the difficulty in properly maintaining raised grassed areas
- the success of Park Square, particularly in the summer and the need to consider the elements of that scheme which led to its popularity, when considering the design of this space
- that the site seemed smaller than when the proposal was first muted; that there was too much paving; the buildings encroached on the greenspace; that what was being proposed was not good enough and did not complement the quality of the proposed KPMG building
- that improved planting needed to be provided; that more grass should be included in the overall scheme and thought should be given to structural planting, e.g. grouped box balls and pleached hornbeams

- the importance of the water feature in the overall scheme; the need for it to be properly maintained and some concerns about safety, especially for young children and people walking through the area late at night
- that the new urban greenspace had to live up to the Council's ambitions for it and that the proposals as presented did not do that
- the Council's commitment to creating a child-friendly city and the feeling that this space fell short of that
- the possibility of reorienting plot C and the creation of temporary landscaping on plots B and C, with mixed views on the effectiveness of these suggestions and concerns that any temporary scheme which was created could be in place for some time, depending on how soon the other building plots came forward for development
- the area of planting around plot C which was considered unnecessary and that a large, single area was more effective

The Chief Planning Officer provided the following comments:

- that the greenspace area was smaller than that shown on the plan included in the Planning Statement, however, that had been a schematic plan only and that the current position was that efforts were being made to attract developers and that some flexibility was needed. Members were also informed that a prospective scheme for plot C would be considered by Executive Board at its November meeting
- that providing good quality greenspace helped when marketing sites and that interim schemes were not cost effective. Whilst it was important to secure the right balance between hard and soft landscaping in this scheme, it was felt appropriate that it was delivered upfront

In addressing the specific issues raised in the report for Members' comments, the following responses were provided:

- that the intended uses of the different character areas were supported subject to reconsideration of the balance between hard and soft landscaping and the proposed palette of materials and tree species which were appropriate and that consideration should be given to the provision of benches and the use of a wider palette of materials. In terms of uses, Sovereign Square should have a sense of repose; be child-friendly and include an active water feature
- that the temporary uses of plots B and C were supported although further consideration should be given to the proposed tree species and planting details to ensure they were appropriate and not litter traps
- to note Members' comments about the comprehensive approach to tree replacement within the proposed greenspace planting design be noted, particularly the comments relating to suitable architectural species for the site
- that whilst the proposals sought to enable all users to pass through the scheme proposal via all main pedestrian connections and be able to use all the aspects of the space, concerns existed about the use of



raised areas, particularly safety issues for young children and that disabled access had to be considered fully

- that the proposals should include works to enhance Pitt Row

**RESOLVED** - To note the report and the comments now made

**23 Application 12/03402/FU - Erection of 364 dwellings with ancillary retail and community facilities - land at Grimes Dyke off York Road Whinmoor LS14**

Plans, photographs and drawings were displayed at the meeting. A Members site visit had taken place earlier in the day

Officers presented a position statement on proposals for a major residential development on land at Grimes Dyke off York Road Whinmoor. It was noted that the site was a Phase 2 housing allocation and that there was an extant outline planning permission on the site for circa 500 dwellings which had been granted on appeal, following refusal of planning permission by the Council

The site would provide connections to another major scheme, known as the Northern Quadrant but could be brought forward in its own right

Details of the topography of the site were provided with a key feature of the site being the presence of strong hedgerow boundaries around and across the site which, where possible, would be enhanced by additional planting. Members were informed that some of the trees on the site were covered by TPOs. A number of greenspace areas were proposed, one to the east, which would also include a flood attenuation basin, an area to the York Road frontage, a more formal urban park to the west and a number of green areas running alongside the retained hedgerows

The current full planning application was for 364 dwellings in a mix of 2, 3 and 4 bedroom detached, semi-detached and terrace properties, together with a gateway block of flats and ancillary and retail and community facilities. The majority of the dwellings would be of two storeys in height although there were some two and a half storey and three storey properties. Some concerns had been raised about the height of the proposed two and a half storey properties adjacent to the north west boundary and further discussions on this would take place with the applicants

Two developers would be on site and whilst there were some differences in the design of the properties they would be traditional in appearance

One issue which had been raised was the inclusion of rear access ways and that Officers had asked for these to be deleted from the scheme in view of the problems these could cause. Concerns also existed about the inclusion of parking courts and discussions were ongoing on this matter in order to seek a resolution. Officers had also provided the applicants with initial comments on the detailed design of the buildings and landscape quality

Regarding the planning obligations Members were informed that the scheme granted permission on appeal provided for affordable housing at a level of 30%. Since that time an interim affordable housing policy requiring a level of 15% affordable housing had been introduced and this is what was being proposed for this scheme. The build out period for the scheme would

be 5 to 6 years and whilst Officers were seeking to optimise the level of affordable housing to be provided over that time, the applicants had stated there were potential viability issues as the cost of the access and education contributions had risen considerably . Further information on this would be provided which would include consultation with Ward Members

The receipt of three representations on the scheme to date was reported, with issues relating to highways, boundary hedges and possible land contamination being raised

Members commented on the following matters:

- the issue raised at the site visit that morning about the possibility of animal carcasses being buried on site following the foot and mouth disease outbreak in the 1960s and the need to properly address this issue if it was established to be the case
- the size of the gardens and whether these met the minimum recommended size
- drainage, with further details being requested
- the proposed phasing of the scheme
- the retail units and their relationship with the Northern Quadrant development
- the block of flats; the need for this in the scheme; that the design of the block was unimaginative and lacked architectural merit and that by definition it could not be regarded as a gateway building due to the absence of development on the opposite side to it
- the comments of Harewood Ward Members about the design of the dwellings and whether the request for the inclusion of chimneys had been met
- the provision of car parking and whether each property had a parking space at the front
- the need to ensure that for the semi-detached properties, the front doors were not sited immediately next to each other
- the need for further details about the proposed materials, particularly the colour of the bricks to be used
- that 'standard' design types for the properties should not be used but that house types specifically designed for the area should be provided
- the amount of usable greenspace in the scheme and that a greater level of this should be provided and consideration of a child-friendly play space would be welcomed
- the siting of an area of greenspace adjacent to York Road in view of the levels of noise and traffic fumes users of this area would experience and the need for the location of this to be reconsidered
- child safety concerns about the siting of the pond
- the need for further information to be provided on the measures to be taken to retain and enhance existing biodiversity on the site
- possible noise nuisance from the A64 which would affect those properties sited closest to it and the need for this to be addressed
- the retail unit; the servicing arrangements for this and that its siting could affect its viability as there was no passing traffic which was essential to the success of such outlets, with similar concerns being raised about the position of the community facility in the scheme

- that Ward Members had now accepted the Inspector's decision on the site and were seeking a high quality, sustainable scheme which would also set the tone for the other large-scale neighbouring schemes which were being proposed
- that in terms of a S106 agreement, that the full education contributions were welcomed as was the commitment to local jobs, training and an early start on site. However, the previous offer of 30% affordable housing which had been accepted by the Inspector when the appeal was allowed could not be ignored, and whilst the Council had agreed an interim policy requiring a lower level of affordable housing provision it had not been envisaged, as had occurred on this site, that a fresh application would be submitted in order to take advantage of the requirement to provide a lower level of affordable housing. Although Ward Members accepted that 30% affordable housing would not now be achieved on this site, it was hoped that given their reputation, the developers would increase the offer, possibly to 20%, which would provide an additional 18 much needed affordable homes. Whilst the Officer's comments regarding viability were noted, the view was expressed that additional affordable housing would not be difficult to achieve on this site, but in the event that viability was raised as an issue, a very comprehensive financial viability assessment would need to be undertaken to establish the facts of the matter
- that the scheme did not make specific provision for older people and that the block of flats could provide such an opportunity, subject to its redesign
- that ginnels must be deleted from the scheme at this early stage due to their unpopularity with residents and the opportunities they presented for crime and anti-social behaviour
- that there were insufficient details in the heads of terms in respect of the retail and community facilities to ascertain what was intended for these
- that there was a need to properly consider the strategic impact of this scheme and the Northern Quadrant development and how the two sites would interact
- that health facilities were much needed in the area and the lack of these were often raised by local residents

Officers provided the following responses:

- that investigations would commence on the issue raised on site about the possible burial of diseased animal carcasses on parts of the site
- that in terms of garden size, whilst on balance, all agreed with the guidance contained in 'Neighbourhoods for Living' some of them were not of a regular shape
- that the part of the site which would contain the pond and flood attenuation measures would be remodelled, but that the land would be undevelopable and where there was heavy rainfall, the amount of water within the attenuation basin would increase and be released at greenfield rates of runoff
- that a phasing plan for the scheme would be sought

- that the relationship between the Grimes Dyke site and the Northern Quadrant site was important as a local centre was being proposed for that site and that a view was sought from Members on whether the retail unit should be deleted in favour of the greater element of retail use in the Northern Quadrant site. In relation to this, there were also other local retail outlets at Fieldhead Carr and Seacroft Town Centre which had to be considered
- regarding the design of the properties, that discussions had taken place with the developers and that they were aware of the issues raised, particularly the detailed design comments made by Ward Members
- that Members' comments about the flats within the scheme would be discussed with the applicants
- that some parking courts were being proposed but that discussions on these were ongoing
- that the issue raised about the positioning of front doors on the semi-detached properties would be taken up with the applicants
- that the comments made about design issues and the level of affordable housing to be provided would also be taken up with the applicants
- in terms of noise nuisance, comments were awaited from the Council's Environmental Protection Team which could include suggested distances and noise attenuation measures
- that an Environmental Statement had been submitted with the application which included an ecology report but that neither newts or badgers were present on the site
- concerning a children's play area, the original scheme did propose one but since then the Council had erected one near to the primary school close to the site but that the provision of a further play area could be considered
- that the design of the frontage of the site took into consideration a possible extension of the NGT route
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In response to the specific issues raised in the report, Members provided the following comments:

- in respect of the omission of the link through to Birchfields Garth, that Members would not press for the footpath to be reinstated as there was an alternative route
- to note the comments made about the buildings being proposed; the need for greater design detail to be provided and local Ward Members' comments to be taken on board. Whilst the proposed mix of house types was acceptable, there were concerns about the two and a half storey properties along the north western side of the site, with a view being expressed that these were overdominant
- concerning the quality of street and landscape planting throughout the development, little detail had been provided but to note the comments made regarding the potential inclusion of a children's play area and the biodiversity of the site

- that Members were broadly satisfied about the location and nature of the proposed pond and flood attenuation area although the issue of safety had been raised
- in respect of the nature and layout of the proposed greenspaces, to note the concerns raised about the location of the area adjacent to York Road; whether an additional area should be provided in view of the large area being taken up to accommodate the flood attenuation basin and that the retention and enhancement of the hedgerows was welcomed
- that in terms of the relationship between the existing and/or new properties proposed, Members were broadly content with this, subject to detail along the north west boundary of the site
- to note Members' comments about the level of affordable housing on the site
- that the location of the shop needed to be considered in relation to the Northern Quadrant site; that the community centre element needed to be separated out from the retail unit and that the provision of medical facilities needed to be looked at in the round

**RESOLVED** – To note the report and the comments now made

Towards of the end of consideration of this matter, Councillor J McKenna and Councillor R Procter left the meeting)

**24 Preapp 12/00749 - Proposed extensions to White Rose Shopping Centre to provide up to 17,050 sqm of development (comprising 918 sqm of A1 retail development (including 1870sqm of back-of-house storage accommodation), 2321sqm of A3/5 catering units and 4136sqm of cinema (D2) use)**

Plans, graphics and photographs were displayed at the meeting. A Members site visit had taken place earlier in the day

The Panel considered a report of the Chief Planning Officer on pre-application proposals for extensions to the White Rose Centre (WRC) and received a presentation on behalf of the applicants

Members were informed this would be a significant scheme and because of the location of the site, there could also be implications for neighbouring authorities

There would be 3 main elements to the scheme, these being an extension to the Primark unit, an extension to the Debenhams unit and the creation of a multiplex cinema, with up to 12 screens, with additional retail and catering outlets, with all of the development taking place on existing car parking on site

To mitigate against the loss of 670 car parking spaces, raised areas of decked car parking would be provided, with a total loss of car parking spaces being 170. Members were informed that discussions were ongoing in respect of the design of the decked car parking

Members were informed that there was an extant permission for 2,000 sqm of additional retail space at the centre

In terms of the main issues the following were highlighted:

- that the site was not within a designated centre and that the developer was in the process of drawing up a sequential test and assessment which would be considered as part of the formal application
  - the proposed three additional A1 units could have an impact on smaller centres, including Morley
    - that the two main extensions were to retail units which also had a presence in the city centre and that assurances that the proposals would not have an adverse effect on vitality and viability of existing centres
      - the introduction of the cinema use and whether this would generate new trips to the centre in its own right
      - public transport issues, with a public transport hub being proposed
      - the possibility of the creation of a pedestrian link from the adjacent White Rose Office Park to the bus station
      - design issues, particularly in respect of the Primark extension and the decked parking
      - S106 issues relating to public transport contributions; greenspace and local employment

The Panel then received a presentation on behalf of the developers and received the following information:

- that the application would give the opportunity to invest further in an existing asset; that the WRC was seen as a community asset with much support being given to local events and community projects, as well as providing a source for local employment, with over 40% of those employed at the WRC living locally
- the proposals would help address some of the problems of deprivation which existed around the site and that the leisure and retail jobs which would be created through the scheme would be of benefit to local residents. Aligned to this, the WRC had established good links with a range of organisations involved in providing education and employment and that the proposals could create up to 1,000 new jobs
- enhanced public space; additional planting and the inclusion of a public square to create a new, active space at the WRC
- improved public transport facilities would also be provided
- in terms of the proposed extension to the Debenhams store, the aim was to extend the architectural language of the existing unit and create active frontages and double height glazing
- public consultation had commenced, with currently 100 hours of this having taken place to date, which also included meeting with Morley Town Council's planning committee. Of the 643 responses received so far, 90% of these were favourable towards the proposals. If permission was granted, the aim was to start on site in Spring 2014, with completion being in Autumn 2015

The Panel raised the following matters:

- the extent of the consultation exercise in view of one Panel Member residing in the area but being previously unaware of the proposals
- the impact of the proposals on traffic, particularly on Dewsbury Road and whether a residents' parking scheme could be considered by the developer to alleviate the problems on streets close to the site and that the cinema use would lead to trips at different times, especially

evenings and weekends when public transport was usually less frequent and this would need to be addressed

- staff car parking and that additional spaces were likely to be required
- the information to be provided as part of the formal planning application and whether historical analysis would be included to show how the WRC in its 15 years of trading had competed with the city centre; whether by extending in the WRC, Primark and Debenhams would close in Leeds city centre; whether existing centres were trading to capacity; the need for Members to be informed about the sustainability of the proposals and some context for the scale of the proposed extensions
- the creation of jobs and for this commitment to be a strong one and for local people in the area to have a job guarantee

In response to the points raised, a representative of the developer provided the following details:

- that further letter drops about the proposals were to be undertaken
- that it was not felt that on-street parking from visitors to the WRC occurred but that management would work with residents to ensure no such problems occurred
- that discussions were ongoing with Metro about the public transport proposals
- that a car sharing scheme for staff had been tried with limited success but that an agreement had been reached with the White Rose Office Park to join their scheme to encourage more car sharing. In terms of visitors to the centre, the new vehicle messaging system was proving successful and that it was felt that the proposals would result in people coming to the centre and staying longer
- that Land Securities as well as being a joint developer of the WRC were also developing the Trinity Scheme in the city centre and this would not be the case if it was felt that both schemes were not viable. In addition, two major retailers had signed up for Trinity and the WRC and that Primark and Debenhams had indicated that the proposed extensions would not impact on their stores in Leeds, Wakefield and Bradford
- that a detailed base of evidence on shopping habits would support the planning application
- that the comments made about the provision of a job guarantee would be considered

In line with the agreed protocol for speaking at pre-application presentations, the Panel then heard from Councillor Finnigan who stated that he had also discussed the scheme with Councillor Congreve, whose ward bordered that of the site and would be providing comments on behalf of the Beeston and Holbeck Ward Members also

Members were informed that there were concerns about the proposals in respect of highways, with Dewsbury Road already experiencing significant congestion from traffic going to the WRC and that reassurances were needed that there would be no worsening of the current situation if the scheme was granted planning permission. There was also concern about parking provision and that sufficient parking would be needed to satisfy the

development for visitors and staff. Public transport also had to be improved with a better drop off/pick up point being provided and a link established to the office park

In terms of the S106 agreement, there should be a continuation of the work which had been done by the WRC with local primary and high schools and that the monitoring of the S106 should be undertaken by Learning and Skills. In respect of greenspace, there was the opportunity to improve an area on the Ring Road, opposite the WRC which would help enhance the immediate setting of the centre

Regarding possible competition, Members were informed that the WRC had not competed but in fact had complemented Morley Town Centre and that it was not felt that the proposals would have a detrimental impact on other surrounding centres. Furthermore there would be the creation of much needed employment and in terms of working closely with the local community, the WRC had a track record of doing this

It was noted that several Members had left the meeting and in relation to the issues raised in the report for specific comment by Panel, the following brief comments were provided:

- that in respect of the proposal to increase the level of retail floorspace and introduce a new cinema use at the WRC, there was some support, although there were issues about the levels of car parking to be provided and the design of the decked parking. It was noted however that no reference in the presentation had been made to the fundamental point that the proposals were against planning policy. Furthermore, it was likely that neighbouring centres and adjoining local authorities were likely to have views on the proposals
- to note the assurances given by the developer on behalf of Debenhams and Primark about their commitment to retaining a presence in Leeds and the centres of neighbouring authorities
- that the provision of an additional cinema would provide more choice
- that there was some support for the three smaller A1 units which were proposed
- regarding highways issues, to note the concerns which had been raised and that there was a need for detailed information on this, particularly the impact of traffic to the cinema and that an analysis of this should include when Leeds United had an evening home game
- to note Members comments about the information which should be provided when the application was to be determined
- to note the concerns about the design of the decked parking; that insufficient detail had been provided about the design of the cinema to enable a provisional view to be formed; that the issue of improvements to an area of greenspace on the Ring Road should be considered. Members noted the comment given by the developer's representative that this could be done as part of the proposed quality landscaping scheme
- the proposals for improvements to the bus stops at the centre were welcomed
- regarding the content of the S106 agreement, this should also address linkages and that there should be specific work done around Middleton, Beeston and Morley; to note that Jobs and Skills would monitor the



local employment matters but the need for the agreement to be enforced rigorously, if that became necessary

- to note that further consultation would be taking place and to a wider area

**RESOLVED** - To note the report, the presentation and the comments now made

During the presentation, Councillor Gruen and Councillor Nash left the meeting

Towards the end of the discussions on this item, Councillors Hardy, G Latty, M Hamilton and S Hamilton left the meeting

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

Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2012 at 1.30pm in the Civic Hall, Leeds