

CONSULTATIVE MEETING OF MEMBERS OF THE CITY PLANS PANEL

TUESDAY, 21ST DECEMBER, 2021

PRESENT: Councillor J McKenna in the Chair

Councillors G Almass, B Anderson,
D Blackburn, Campbell, P Carlill,
R Finnigan, A Garthwaite, J Heselwood,
G Latty, J McKenna, E Nash, P Wadsworth
and N Walshaw

1 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

There were no declarations of interest made at the meeting.

2 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors: K Brooks, D Cohen and C Gruen.

Councillors: G Almass, B Anderson and J Heselwood were in attendance as substitute Members.

3 Pre-Application Presentation for proposed development (PREAPP/21/00279)

The Chief Planning Officer submitted a report which set out detail of a pre-application presentation for proposed demolition of existing building and construction of mixed-use scheme comprising retail floorspace at basement and ground floor, and purpose-built student accommodation on floors 1-9 of the new building at 140-142 Briggate, Leeds LS1 6LS.

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

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

- Site / location / context
- Former House of Fraser Department store site
- The site is located on the east side of Briggate, midway between Duncan Street to the south and Kirkgate to the north
- The rear, eastern, elevation of the existing premises fronts Central Road which curves gently in towards the building.
- Although the Central Area Conservation Area is extensive, it excludes much of the urban block in which the site is located.

- This development would meet the need for purpose-built student accommodation within a city centre asset and would regenerate the area caused by the decline in large retail store demand
- Comments had been received from the Leeds Civic Trust, who were generally in support of the proposal
- The proposal – The existing block would be demolished, and a new building would be constructed - mixed-use scheme comprising retail floorspace at basement and ground floor and purpose-built student accommodation on floors 1-9 of the new building. Upper floors to be set back, the building creates a natural sweep along the Central Road elevation
- Retail floorspace (3,272sqm) at basement and ground floor level and 368 bedspaces in purpose-built student accommodation (PBSA) in the floors above. All apartments meet emerging space standards
- Well-designed internal amenity space, external roof top amenity space wellbeing gardens/ terraces
- The building height and massing would not compromise key views
- Materials – Grey stone, zinc, bronze anodised aluminium to base, extensive glazing (Dark materials to base, lighter as the building rises)
- It is intended the building would achieve BREEAM excellent rating
- Use of low carbon technologies
- Car free development
- Building Management Plan
- Public realm to be enhanced and extended
- Building to be future proofed for alternative uses
- Redevelopment of the site would regenerate the area and address anti-social issues

Members raised the following questions to the developer's representatives:

- There was Blue Badge parking in the area, would this be retained or located elsewhere
- The start of the student year, how would arrivals be managed
- The size of the cluster bedrooms appears to be very small at 12.5sqm
- Could you elaborate further on your comment that purpose-built student accommodation frees up housing stock in traditional student areas – Keen to see any evidence you may have.

In responding to the issues raised the developer's representatives said:

- Members were informed that the intention was to retain or replace the Blue Badge parking
- Members were informed that student drop-offs and pick-ups would be delivered by a Building Management Plan based on using the existing nearby multi-storey car parks and allotting arrival times.
- The size of the cluster bedrooms conformed with the council's emerging space standards and provided sufficient comfort to students
- An expert on student demography studies had been engaged to look at the freeing up of traditional student housing and the conversion back to

family accommodation. The principle was right, but the analysis for Headingley had yet to be completed. The information would be shared with Members once it became available.

In offering comments, Members raised the following issues:

- Members were generally supportive of the proposal; the proposed design was welcomed, and Members were supportive about the principle of retaining a retail shopping frontage to the ground floor with residential accommodation above
- Members welcomed the proposed mixed use suggesting it would regenerate the area and create greater footfall
- Further details were required around the use of materials, the supply of sample panels would be useful
- There was some concern about the design of the upper floors, which appeared to be an “after-thought”
- One Member suggested the Central Road frontage (the Crescent) appeared too dominant, the reveals and horizontals were too deep, a lighter touch was required
- The mature tree(s) should be retained
- Members expressed a preference for smaller commercial units on Central Road to be in keeping with existing commercial/ retail units on the opposite side of the road

In offering comments on the officers’ questions in the report:

- Members were of the view that the proposed redevelopment of the site for retailing and student accommodation was acceptable in principle
- Subject to confirmation of detailed proposals Members were supportive of the approach towards living conditions for the student accommodation
- The proposed scale and form of development was generally acceptable
- Members considered the development’s proposed provisions for transportation and accessibility were acceptable
- Subject to confirmation of details, Members were supportive of the approach to sustainable development

The Chair thanked the developers for their attendance and presentation suggesting that Members appeared to be generally supportive of the development.

RECOMMENDED –

- (i) To note the details contained in the pre-application presentation

- (ii) That the developers be thanked for their attendance and presentation