



Report of the Chief Planning Officer

SOUTH AND WEST PLANS PANEL

Date: 7th March 2024

Subject: Pre-application presentation of proposed development comprising demolition of existing buildings; and erection of a multi-storey (up to 27 storeys) residential development with multi-purpose internal and external amenity spaces, associated car parking, public open space and landscaping at land at Evolution House, 34 - 36 Springwell Road, Holbeck, LS12 1AW (PREAPP/23/00376)

Applicant - Drum Property Group

Electoral Wards Affected:

Beeston & Holbeck

Yes

Ward Members consulted

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 proposed development to allow Members to consider and comment on the proposals at this stage.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The purpose of this report is to appraise Members of forthcoming proposals to demolish the existing office building and redevelop the site for a mixed-use development comprising commercial floorspace at ground level and residential accommodation of 387 apartments above, and to inform Members of a short presentation that forms part of the on-going pre-submission consultation regarding this proposal.

2.0 SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

2.1 The site is a wedge-shaped parcel of land currently occupied by a two-storey office block with associated surface car parking. The site is located in the middle of Springwell Road; this is part of character area 7 of the Holbeck Neighbourhood Plan, which is the area north of the viaduct. This is an area of transition just outside the boundary of the designated City Centre, the boundary of which aligns with the railway line to the north-east. It is also physically separated from the main local centre of Holbeck by the viaduct and thus has a more industrial character.

2.2 Access to the site is off Springwell Road to the west. Adjacent to the site to the north is Cartwright House, a low rise mid to late 20th century commercial building. A resolution to approve a 30 storey residential building to replace Cartwright House was granted at South

and West Plans Panel in Autumn 2023. This will form a second phase to the Springwell Gardens residential development that is now complete on the corner of Springwell Road and Whitehall Road. Springwell Road itself contains further late 20th century commercial and office blocks, generally two / three storey or similar.

- 2.3 The site lies in an area which was historically characterised by heavy industry and the railway. The Holbeck Industrial Heritage Area lies close to the site to the south. As historical industries have ceased in the locality, many nearby sites have been cleared and benefit from planning consents for large, new mixed uses which include much residential development. The area has poor landscape quality and a poor sense of identity at present.
- 2.4 To the immediate north-east side of the boundary, a Network Rail goods yard and sidings exists connecting with the Whitehall Rail junction. This is allocated in the Natural Resources & Waste Local Plan. The main part of the sidings is currently operated by Biffa Waste Services who are in effect operating a waste transfer facility which deposits Council street cleaning waste products by lorry and which is removed during the early hours of the morning by freight trains. A second part of the area is currently used by Network Rail for other uses including track maintenance trucks and signal design teams housed in portacabin blocks. An older warehouse style building also exists, which is largely unused. Should a viable further freight operation (or expansion of the current operation) be demonstrated it is possible that the use of these sidings could be further expanded.
- 2.5 Heading north-east, towards Leeds Railway Station, there are a number of large-scale office blocks currently under construction along the Whitehall Road corridor, in particular at Wellington Place (MEPC). Other recently completed developments include a new Premier Inn Hotel, and a large mixed used development ('Central Square') on the former Lumiere site. More directly south-west of the site is a relatively modern 4 storey mixed use block which accommodates a carpet and sandwich shop on the ground floor, with flats above. Further south-west along Whitehall Road, some warehouse and car showroom buildings are also evident in the locality.
- 2.6 The western edge of Holbeck Conservation Area lies at its closest point, approximately 100m to the south of the site. The Holbeck, South Bank Urban Village boundary lies at its closest point around 225m to the south-east on Water Lane. Holbeck (Lower Order Local Centre) at its closest point lies about 475m to the south.

3.0 PROPOSALS

- 3.1 The proposed development is for the demolition of the existing building and construction of a stepped residential development comprising a 12 storey rectangular block with a 27 storey tower attached. The development will include ancillary commercial space, co-working space, a gym, creche, car parking and external amenity space.
- 3.2 The development proposes 387 residential apartments with a housing mix of:
- 50% 1 bed apartments
 - 39% 2 bed apartments
 - 11% 3 bed apartments

It will also provide:

- Flexible commercial floorspace providing an active frontage at ground level.
 - Secure Cycle Storage: circa 60% provision, plus a pool bike scheme for residents.
 - Secure parking for 14 cars, of which 2 are accessible spaces. All parking spaces to have an Electric Vehicle Charging point.
 - Communal outdoor private terrace on the 12th floor
 - External Public Open Space
- 3.3 All of the residential apartments are designed to meet or exceed the nationally described space standards as set by Leeds Core Strategy Policy H9 and will include a policy compliant mix of accessible dwellings.

3.4 The proposed development would require 7% on site affordable housing units in line with CS policy H5.

3.5 The proposal will include a wind mitigation scheme

4.0 HISTORY OF NEGOTIATIONS AND PLANNING HISTORY

4.1 The developer first entered into pre-application discussions with officers in November 2023. Officers have consulted with various colleagues within the Council to seek comments on areas of specialism and have held meetings with the agent and applicants; and have involved Ward Members in this process. Since the pre-application proposals were initially submitted, the scheme has been reduced and improved in order to lessen the impact of the development, create an area of useable Public Open Space and to improve the quality of the layout.

5.0 CONSULTATION RESPONSES:

5.1 Highways

Highways advise no objections in principle subject to satisfaction of the following matters at a full planning application stage:

- Footway widening may be required to accommodate EVCP at car club spaces if required along Springwell Road. The footway widening would require land dedication at the site frontage on Springwell Road.
- The proposed accesses should accord with the Transport SPD. The access to the undercroft parking must allow for two-way passing. Any loss of Pay and display bays will need to be identified.
- All the car parking spaces should have an Electrical Vehicle Charging Point (EVCP).
- There is a shared access between the approved site to the northwest and the proposed site. Confirmation of the proposed use of this access is required to ensure impact on approved scheme is understood.
- Cycle and motorcycle parking and disabled parking should accord with the Parking SPD. Car parking provision needs to be justified and all spaces must be equipped with EVCP.
- Contributions towards wayfinding, offsite improvements including for cyclists/pedestrians, TRO alterations and future on-street parking restrictions, loss of pay and display are required.
- A Travel Plan and Transport Statement would be required with any future planning application, to include assessment of pedestrian and cycle routes.

5.2 Contaminated Land

Potentially contaminative historical activities have been identified on and adjacent to the site. To support the future full planning application the applicant should include a Phase 1 Desk Study. Depending on the outcome, a Phase 2 Site Investigation Report and Remediation Statement may also be required.

5.3 Flood Risk Management

The application site is located within Flood Zone 1. Standard advice concerning the submission of details including a Drainage Assessment that supports a SuDS based drainage design to support the future full planning application has been advised.

5.4 Design Officer

The proposals have been the subject of a series of detailed design discussions since November 2023. The design officer considers the amended scheme an improvement and commented in summary:

- The form of the building has been rationalised, though they suggest the 12 storey element could be reduced further in height

- Elevational treatment of the tower element requires revision
- Deep reveals are welcomed
- Wind mitigation structures must not encroach on the highway/footway
- Support use of red brick and a second complimentary material such as terracotta

5.5 Environmental Health (Pollution Control)

A noise assessment that considers the impact at upper storeys of the development as well as near to ground level will be required to inform on the acoustic mitigation required. The assessment will also need to consider the ramifications for ventilation and control of overheating in particular for dwellings that are single aspect, west & south facing and where windows have to remain closed to attain suitable internal sound levels.

5.6 Landscape Team

While there is very little detail of the approach to landscape at this stage, it is positive that amenity spaces are orientated south-west and so should receive good levels of sunlight. It is encouraged for tree planting to be provided along the Springwell Road frontage in accordance with the NPPF requirement for tree-lined streets.

5.7 Sustainable Development Unit

A passive design analysis needs to be supplied that should cover as a minimum - site location, site weather, microclimate, building layout, building orientation, building form, building fabric, thermal mass or other fabric thermal storage, building occupancy type, daylighting strategy, ventilation strategy, adaptation to climate change. Any future application will need to demonstrate full compliance with policies EN1, EN2, EN4 and EN8 of the Core Strategy (as amended).

5.8 Access Officer

The DAS has an extract from H10 but no information as to how the scheme would meet it. The applicant will need to complete a H10 form in due course to show us where the accessible units will be provided so we can check they include all unit types and sizes.

6.0 **RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES**

6.1 **Statutory Context**

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires the application to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. For the purposes of decision making at this site, the Development Plan for Leeds currently comprises the following documents:

- The Leeds Core Strategy (Adopted November 2014 and as amended by the Core Strategy Selective Review 2019)
- Saved Leeds Unitary Development Plan Policies (UDPR 2006)
- The Natural Resources & Waste Local Plan (NRWLP 2013) including revised policies Minerals 13 and 14 (2015).
- Leeds Site Allocations Plan (SAP 2019)
- Holbeck Neighbourhood Plan (2018)

These development plan policies are supplemented by supplementary planning guidance and documents.

6.2 **Development Plan**

Leeds Core Strategy (CS)

Leeds Core Strategy sets out strategic level policies and vision to guide the delivery of development investment decisions and the overall future of the district. The site is located outside the City Centre boundary. The most relevant policies are set out below:

- Spatial Policy 1 Location and scale of development.
- Spatial Policy 2 hierarchy of centres and spatial approach to retailing, offices, intensive leisure and culture
- Spatial Policy 6 Housing requirement and allocation of housing land
- Spatial policy 7 distribution of housing land and allocations
- Spatial Policy 8 Economic development priorities
- Spatial Policy 9 Employment
- Spatial Policy 11 Transport infrastructure investment priorities such as pedestrian improvements
- Policy CC3 Improving connectivity between the City Centre and Neighbouring Communities.
- Policy H3 Housing Density
- Policy H4 Housing Mix
- Policy H5 Affordable Housing
- Policy P10 Design
- Policy P11 Heritage
- Policy P12 Landscape
- Policy T1 Transport management
- Policy T2 Accessibility requirements and new development
- Policy H9 Space Standards
- Policy H10 Accessible Dwellings
- Policy EN1 Carbon dioxide reduction
- Policy EN2 Sustainable design and construction
- Policy EN4 District heating
- Policy EN5 Managing flood risk
- Policy EN8 Electrical Vehicle Charging
- Policy G5 Open space provision
- Policy G8 Protection of important species and habitats
- Policy G9 Biodiversity Improvements

6.3 The Development Plan also includes the Natural Resources and Waste Development Plan Document (2013): Developments should consider the location of redundant mine shafts and the extraction of coal prior to construction.

6.4 **Leeds Unitary Development Plan Review 2006 (UDPR) Saved Policies**

Relevant Saved Policies include:

- Policy GP5 all planning considerations
- Policy N25 Boundary Treatments
- Policy BD2 / BD5 design and siting of new buildings
- Policy LD1 landscaping

6.5 **Leeds Natural Resources and Waste DPD**

The plan sets out where land is needed to enable the City to manage resources, like minerals, energy, waste and water over the next 15 years, and identifies specific actions which will help use natural resources in a more efficient way.

Relevant policies include:

- Air 1 management of air quality through new development
- Water 1 water efficiency including sustainable drainage
- Water 7 surface water run-off
- Water 2 protection of water quality
- Water 4 development in flood risk areas
- Water 6 flood risk assessments
- Land 1 contaminated land
- Land 2 development and trees
- Minerals 2 sand and gravel
- Minerals 3 coal safeguarding
- Minerals 13 Transport Modes

6.6 **Relevant Supplementary Planning Documents/Guidance (SPD/SPG):**

- SPD Tall Buildings Design Guide (2010) and Consultation Draft (2019)
- SPD Building for Tomorrow Today: Sustainable Design and Construction (2011)
- Transport SPD (2023)
- SPD Accessible Leeds (2016)
- SPG Neighbourhoods for Living (2003, 2015)

6.7 **Holbeck Neighbourhood Plan**

- R1: Continuing Regeneration
- C3: Improving Health and Wellbeing
- H1: Affordable Housing
- H2: Housing Mix
- E1: New employment uses
- G1: Strategic Green Infrastructure and Local Green Corridors (SG1 – Viaduct)
- G4: Improving the Public Realm
- HC7: Positive Design
- T1: Increasing Opportunities for walking and cycling
- T2: Reducing air pollution and congestion

6.8 **Site Allocations Plan**

The site is unallocated in the SAP.

6.9 **National Planning Policy Framework 2023 (NPPF)**

The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied and is a material consideration in planning decisions. It states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. So that sustainable development is pursued in a positive way at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. It states that decision makers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible (para 38).

6.10 The Framework sets policies on the following issues which are relevant to this planning application proposal:

2. Achieving sustainable development
4. Decision making

5. delivering a sufficient supply of homes
6. Building a strong, competitive economy
8. Promoting healthy and safe communities
9. Promoting sustainable transport
11. Making effective use of land
12. Achieving well-designed and beautiful places
14. Meeting the challenge of climate change and flooding
15. Conserving and enhancing the natural environment
16. Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

7.0 MAIN ISSUES

Officers have held discussions with the applicant over the proposed development and have focussed on a number of wide ranging matters. Members are asked to consider the following matters in particular:

7.1 Principle of Development

The site is unallocated in the Site Allocations Plan (SAP). This proposal consists of a mixed use development, primarily residential, with some commercial use at ground floor, a gym and co-working space. The development is anticipated to provide (approximately) 327 apartments.

7.2 The proposal would involve the redevelopment of brownfield land for housing in the inner area of the city. The site falls outside of the designated City Centre, and the development would contribute to the ongoing mix of a vibrant community in this area of the city.

7.3 Ground floor active frontages have been annotated to the front elevation which is welcomed.

7.4 The principle of the development is considered acceptable when assessed against Core Strategy Policies, the SAP allocation and the NPPF, subject to all other detailed planning considerations.

- **Do Members support the principle of the development?**

7.5 Design and Layout

Officers have met with the developer and their agents to discuss the scheme and have sought to amend the design and layout to a form of development with is acceptable in principle. Officers consider the concept of the layout is broadly acceptable, although further detail will be required, including the design of any wind mitigation structures where required.

7.6 The principle of a tall building in this area is accepted. There is the 16 storey residential development on the corner of Springwell Road and Whitehall Road. Phase 2 Springwell Gardens was also accepted by members for a 30 storey development adjacent to this site, although this is yet to be built.

7.8 At this stage wind testing has not been carried out. Due to the proposed scale of the buildings wind testing will be required in accordance with the Draft Wind and Micro-climate Toolkit SPD.

7.7 Members are asked to consider the presentation given and to have regard to the comments above. In particular:

- **Do Members support the proposed scale and form of development (subject to the outcome of wind testing at application stage)?**

7.10 Landscape and Public Open Space (POS)

Based on the size and amount of accommodation proposed, Core Strategy policy G4 requires open space provision of approximately 11,293 sqm on-site. The scheme proposes an area of public realm to south east of the site and a small triangular wedge to the front. This is estimated to be around 2,000 sqm which is a significant shortfall when compared to the requirements of policy G4. A commuted sum is therefore proposed to make up the shortfall; to be spent on the creation or enhancement of nearby greenspace off-site.

7.11 Officer discussions with the developer note that the closest existing POS is Holbeck Moor which is not considered easily accessible to future occupants of the development. The agent is willing to investigate looking for potential new open space sites closer to the proposed development where a commuted sum could be spent.

- **Do members support the proposed approach to provision of Public Open Space within the development?**

7.13 Highways Issues

The site is located within the fringe area and accessible by a varied choice of modes of transport. The proposed scheme utilises the existing vehicular access point off Springwell Road to an underground car park.

7.14 14 car parking spaces are proposed. 2 of these will be accessible spaces. For the site location, the Transport SPD sets a maximum level of car parking provision, there is not minimum requirement. However, it should be demonstrated there is no detrimental impact on the local highway. To ensure the impact upon on-street parking as a result of overspill parking associated with the development is considered, TRO contribution will be required towards any future on-street parking restrictions.

7.15 A detailed Transport Assessment and Travel Plan will be required with a full planning application. A contribution will be required towards improvements for public transport users, cyclists, and pedestrians in the site vicinity.

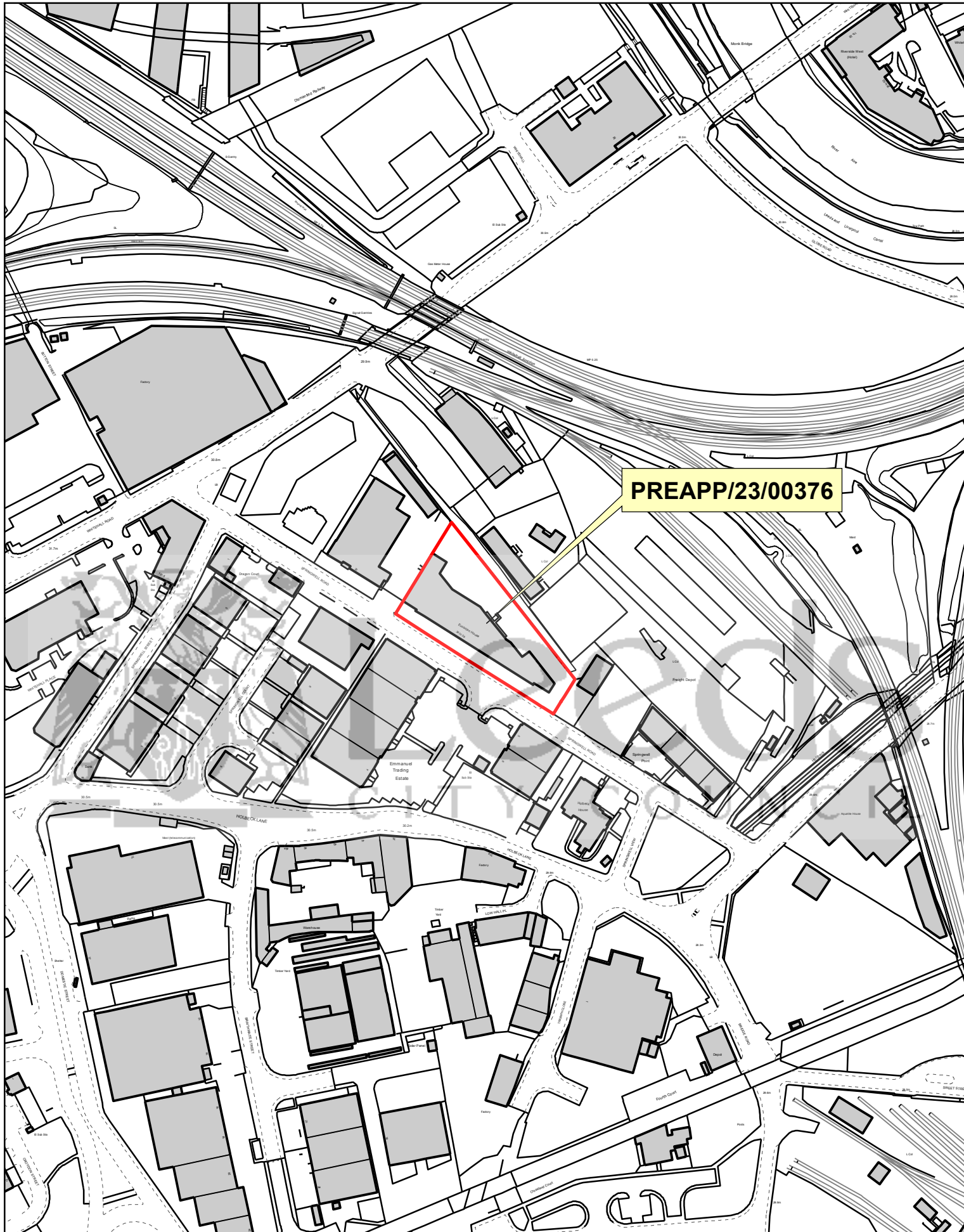
7.16 Taking into account the above and the presentation before Members:

- **Do Members consider the approach to car parking is acceptable?**

8.0 CONCLUSION

8.1 Members are asked to note the contents of the report and the presentation, and are invited to provide feedback, in particular, on the issues outlined below:

- **Do Members support the principle of the development?**
- **Do Members support the proposed scale and form of development (subject to the outcome of wind testing at application stage)?**
- **Do members support the proposed approach to provision of Public Open space within the development?**
- **Do Members consider the approach to car parking is acceptable?**



PREAPP/23/00376

SOUTH AND WEST PLANS PANEL

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