



Report of the Chief Planning Officer

CITY PLANS PANEL

Date: 16th May 2024

Subject: PREAPP/24/00010 - Purpose built student accommodation development including a mixed offer of cluster and studio units, totalling c.717 units and associated residential amenity spaces at Blenheim House, Duncombe Street, Leeds, LS1 4PL

APPLICANT
Chris Deeks

Electoral Wards Affected:

Little London & Woodhouse

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 emerging scheme to allow Members to consider and comment on the proposals at this stage.

1. INTRODUCTION

This presentation is intended to inform Members at an early stage of the emerging proposals for the demolition of an office building at Blenheim House, Duncombe Street, LS1 4PL and redevelopment of the site to provide Purpose Built Student Accommodation (PBSA) and associated facilities and landscaping.

2. PROPOSAL

The proposal relates to the outcome of a series of focused design workshops and discussions concerning the demolition of Blenheim House (currently an office block) and the redevelopment of the site to provide a new student accommodation block on the following basis:

- Circa 717 bedspaces (including studio's clusters and adaptable studios)
- Part 20, part 14, part 11, part 9 storey building
- Clusters: 30% / Studios: 70% / 5% accessible units
- 1443 m² (Lower Ground, Ground and Level 13 internal Amenity Spaces)
- Provision of publicly accessible landscaped area to Duncombe Street (300sqm) including seating and new trees / planting
- Provision of external student amenity space (courtyarded) 700sqm.
- New entrance way to Marlborough Street with level / ramped access, street trees and seating
- Predominantly car free development (disabled parking space to be provided)

3. SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

The application building and site (0.43 hectares) is located within the designated city centre boundary and comprises a 5-storey office building of red brick construction and shallow pitched roof. It is not allocated for a specific land use. It lies within the boundary of Little Woodhouse Neighbourhood Planning Area, however at the time of this enquiry there is no made Neighbourhood Plan. The building is located in close proximity to an area utilised as public parkland / play space to the east of the site beyond the adjacent Exchange Court building. To the East is Exchange Court which presently shares a parking area with the enquiry site. Exchange Court is currently under conversion and extension in order to provide PBSA accommodation through planning permissions 22/06306/FU (varied by 23/01516/FU).

The site's southern boundary is defined by the A58 and associated infrastructure with a discernible drop in level between the enquiry site and the highway environment below, which includes a pedestrian footway spanning the southern boundary edge leading to West Street and northward towards Westgate and Burley Road.

The northern site boundary meets Duncombe Street beyond which is Marlborough Court comprising the Marlborough Grange Tower block and a series of four storey housing blocks forming an enclave between Burley Road to the north and Duncombe Street (which includes street frontage garaging and a podium base to the enclave upon which the blocks to the western edge of the enclave are sited). The southern site boundary of the enquiry site is dominated by trees and mature planting.

3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

Planning applications:

23/01516/FU - Variation of Condition 2 (Plans to be Approved) to previously approved Planning Application 22/06306/FU (Exchange Court – the adjacent site) (approved)

22/06306/FU - Change of use from offices (Use Class E) to student accommodation (sui generis) including external alterations, 3 storey upwards extension, erection of

refuse store and outdoor amenity space and landscaping (Exchange Court, 2 West way, Duncombe Street, LS1 4AX – the adjacent site) (approved)

20/356/93/FU - 1 3 storey and 1 part 4 storey and part 5 storey office blocks with car parking (the current building) (approved)

4. HISTORY OF NEGOTIATIONS AND CONSULTATIONS UNDERTAKEN

The enquiry has been the subject of a series of meetings involving the case officer, design officer, highways and the applicant as follows:

4.1 Pre-Application Meeting No.1 - 06.02.24

- Increased activity through ground floor zoning to A58 frontage is required
- Concerns were expressed by officers regarding height along Duncombe Street and how the tower height references the existing character heights.
- Mitigation will be required for the proposed loss of mature trees along Marlborough Street.
- Sections are required through Duncombe Street showing the wider Marlborough Estate to make proper assessments on residential amenity

4.2 Design Workshop No.1 - 20.03.24

- Plant now removed and an area of amenity space introduced along the A58 facade.
- Main entrance now relocated to Marlborough Street.
- Building footprint shifted away from Duncombe Street by circa 7m.
- Reduction in height by one/ two storeys along Duncombe Street.
- Set back to the tower elevation provided from the A58.

4.3 Design Workshop No.2 - 27.03.24

- Massing now stepped further away from Duncombe Street by circa 2.6m by removing two rooms on each floor.
- The landscaping proposal has been enhanced along Duncombe Street to mitigate impact on the adjacent Marlborough Grange.
- Additional amenity space replaces the previous living spaces on the ground floor.
- Additional glazing between tower element and 'shoulder' to provide facade distinction.

4.4 Ward Councillor Meeting (Cllr Brooks and Cllr Marshall Katung in attendance) - 17.04.24

- Further consideration to the massing at Duncombe Street where the scheme addresses the properties at Marlborough Grange, introducing a set back upper floor and alternate treatment.
- Consideration for the proximity distances to the end of the Duncombe St. elevation, reflective of the language on Exchange Court. Mitigating the impact on the adjacent Marlborough Grange properties.
- Consideration for the impacts of sunlighting to the scheme including the internal courtyard space.
- Consideration for the activity on Marlborough Street and how this is addressed through the building and landscaping proposals.

5 Consultations undertaken

5.1 Highways

5.1.1 No objections in principle. A future planning application will need to address the following matters:

- Provision of Transport Assessment including assessment of the proposals against the accessibility criteria within the Core Strategy
- Assessment of walking and cycle routes to/from the site and identification of any gaps in provision and improvements required
The development would be expected to make a financial contribution to pedestrian and cycling improvements in the vicinity of the site.
- A contribution towards way finding signage may be required with a subsequent planning application.
- Provision of a full travel plan which would be controlled through a section 106 agreement.

5.2 Flood Risk Management

5.2.1 The application site is located within Flood Zone 2 and there are records of recent flooding within the property or adjacent areas. An initial review has also identified that there are no known surface water flood risks which may require specific mitigation and may impact on the proposed development.

5.2.2 The applicant has not submitted any drainage details in relation to the enquiry and a NPPF compliant site-specific Flood Risk Assessment should be submitted as part of any formal planning application which sets out the proposed surface water and foul drainage strategy. A flood evacuation plan is also required at full application stage.

5.3 Contaminated Land

5.3.1 A future planning application must be supported by a phase 1 desk study report. Depending on the outcome of the Phase 1 Desk Study, a Phase 2 (Site Investigation) Report and Remediation Statement may also be required.

5.4 Nature Team

5.4.1 Mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) is now in place and the scheme will need to achieve a minimum 10% net gain in Biodiversity Units. To note in particular is the use of Blue line land for any Offsite Biodiversity Net Gain - this will have to be entered onto the National Sites Register and a s106 or Conservation Covenant required for delivery of a management plan, progress reports and habitat monitoring. The applicant has been advised of the validation requirements pursuant to a full application being made in due course and the specific mechanism of addressing BNG has not formed part of the enquiry or proposals to date.

5.4.2 Where the initial Preliminary Ecological Appraisal Report (PEAR) for the proposed development concludes that it is likely to affect Protected or Priority species (such as bats), the applicant must submit an Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA) as part of the planning application for assessment.

5.4.3 The applicant has also been advised to consider general species enhancements integral to the new building fabric at this early design stage.

5.5 Landscape Team

- 5.5.1 It is stated in the supporting information that 15 (of 18) existing site trees are to be removed to facilitate development. A tree survey has been commissioned but this has not been provided or considered as yet. It is not possible to comment fully on the proposed approach to trees without tree survey information, however it is broadly not supported for healthy mature trees to be removed and this will be a matter which will be held in the overall balance of considerations at application stage and for which the views of members are sought at this early stage.

5.6 Design Team

As noted at section 4 above, the proposals have been assessed as part of a staged, iterative design workshop process, with the case officer and design officer and applicant. The 'final' proposals before members are intended to preface a detailed design scheme and work continues on that process, however the scheme before members is considered to be a well-considered proposal in terms of its townscape impact and the applicant is seeking comfort on the proposals to date to assist them in informing the next stage of detailed design.

6.0 PLANNING POLICY AND GUIDANCE

6.1 National

6.1.1 National Planning Policy Framework

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. It sets out the Government's requirements for the planning system. The NPPF must be taken into account in the preparation of local and neighbourhood plans and is a material consideration in planning decisions.

The following sections of the NPPF are most relevant for the purposes of determining any subsequent planning application:

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 places
14. Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change
15. Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

6.2 Local

6.2.1 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)

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

6.3 Leeds Core Strategy (CS)

The adopted CS sets out strategic level policies and vision to guide the delivery of development investment decisions and the overall future of the district. The most relevant policies are set out in the paragraphs below:

- 6.3.1 **Spatial Policy 1:** Location of Development prioritises the redevelopment of previously developed land within the Main Urban Area, prioritising urban regeneration and taking advantage of existing services and high levels of accessibility.
- 6.3.2 **Spatial Policy 3:** Role of Leeds City Centre seeks to maintain and enhance the role of the City Centre as an economic driver for the District and City Region through a number of criteria. These criteria include comprehensively planning the redevelopment and re-use of vacant and under-used sites for mixed use development and areas of public space; enhancing streets and creating a network of open and green spaces to make the City Centre more attractive; and improving connections between the City Centre and adjoining neighbourhoods.
- 6.3.3 **Spatial Policy 8:** Economic Development Priorities supports a competitive local economy through promoting the development of a strong local economy through enterprise and innovation, job retention and creation, promoting the need for a skilled workforce, educational attainment and reducing barriers to employment opportunities, and by supporting training/skills and job creation initiatives via planning agreements.
- 6.3.4 **Spatial Policy 11:** Transport Infrastructure Investment Priorities sets out a series of spatial priorities for the delivery of an integrated transport strategy for Leeds. One priority is related to improved facilities for pedestrians to promote safety and accessibility, particularly connectivity between the edges of the City Centre and the City Centre.
- 6.3.5 **Policy CC1:** City Centre Development sets out the planned growth within the City Centre, including for 10,200 new dwellings, including office growth. Part (b) encourages residential development, provided that all other town centre uses are supported in the City Centre and the use does not negatively impact on the amenity of neighbouring users.

- 6.3.6 **Policy CC3:** Improving Connectivity between the City Centre and Neighbouring Communities sets out the requirement to improve routes connecting the City Centre with adjoining neighbourhoods and improve connections within the City Centre through developer contributions.
- 6.3.7 **Policy H6B** refers to proposals for purpose-built student accommodation. Development will be controlled to take the pressure off the need to use private housing; to avoid the loss of existing housing suitable for families; to avoid excessive concentrations of student accommodation; to avoid locations that would lead to detrimental impacts on residential amenity; and to provide satisfactory living accommodation for the students.
- 6.3.8 **Policy H9** Paragraph 5.2.46 of the supporting text to policy H9 states that “Provision of reasonable space standards is still important for student accommodation, and this will need to be judged on a case by case basis, and via the application of any national standards that might be created in the future”.
- 6.3.9 **Policy P10:** Design requires new development to be based on a thorough contextual analysis to provide good design appropriate to its scale and function. New development is also required to deliver high quality inclusive design. Policy P10 sets out a series of key design principles (i to vi) for new development, in relation to size, design, layout, existing assets, amenity and accessibility.
- 6.3.10 **Policies T1:** Transport Management and **T2:** Accessibility Requirements and New Development identify transport management measures and accessibility measures to ensure new development is adequately served by highways and public transport, and provides safe and secure access for pedestrians, cyclists and people with impaired mobility.
- 6.3.11 Policies **EN1** and **EN2** set out the sustainable construction and on-going sustainability measures for new development. It establishes targets for CO2 reduction and requires at least 10% low or zero carbon energy production on site.

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

The site lies within the designated City Centre. Saved policies that are relevant to this scheme are:

- 6.4.1 Policy **GP5** which states that all relevant planning considerations are to be resolved;
- 6.4.2 Policy **BD2** which requires that new buildings complement and enhance existing skylines, vistas and landmarks; and
- 6.4.3 Policy **BD5** which requires that new buildings consider both their own amenity and that of their surroundings, including usable space, privacy and satisfactory daylight and sunlight.

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.

- 6.5.1 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 3 coal safeguarding

6.6 Relevant Local Supplementary Planning Guidance/Documents

6.6.1 The most relevant local supplementary planning guidance (SPG), supplementary planning documents (SPD) are outlined below:

- Building for Tomorrow Today: Sustainable Design and Construction Supplementary Planning Document (August 2011).
- Accessible Leeds Supplementary Planning Document (November 2016)
- Neighbourhoods For Living (December 2003)
- Draft Wind and Microclimate Toolkit (July 2021)
- City Centre Urban Design Strategy SPD (September 2000)
- Little Woodhouse Neighbourhood Design Statement (2011)
- Transport SPD (February 2023)

6.6.2 Leeds City Council has also prepared a draft 'HMO and PBSA Amenity Standards' SPD which was endorsed by the Council at Development Plan Panel on 11th December 2020. The aim of the draft SPD is to introduce minimum standards for space, light and ventilation for new proposals for HMOs and PBSA proposals in order to complement Core Strategy Policy H9. The SPD is in draft form and at the early stages of the adoption process. In accordance with the NPPF it can only be afforded very limited weight in decision-making.

6.6.3 The Site Allocations Plan (SAP) states that Leeds City Centre is the main retail and service centre for the city. The site is located within the designated City Centre however the site is not allocated for any specific use.

7 CLIMATE EMERGENCY:

7.1 The Council declared a climate emergency on the 27th March 2019 in response to the UN's report on Climate Change.

7.2 The Planning Act 2008, alongside the Climate Change Act 2008, sets out that climate mitigation and adaptation are central principles of plan-making. The NPPF makes clear that the planning system should help to shape places in ways that contribute to radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions in line with the objectives of the Climate Change Act 2008.

7.3 As part of the Council's Best City Ambition, the Council seeks to deliver a low-carbon and affordable transport network, as well as protecting nature and enhancing habitats for wildlife. The Council's Development Plan includes a number of planning policies which seek to meet this aim, as does the NPPF. These are material planning considerations in determining planning applications.

8. PUBLIC SECTOR EQUALITY DUTY:

- 8.1 The Equality Act 2010 requires local authorities to comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty. Taking into account all known factors and considerations, the requirement to consider, and have due regard to, the needs of diverse groups to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and access, and foster good relations between different groups in the community has been fully taken into account in the consideration of the enquiry to date.

9 MAIN ISSUES

- Principle of development
- Climate Change
- Design and Townscape
- Residential Amenity (occupiers)
- Residential Amenity (neighbours)
- Highways and Transportation
- Landscape and Trees
- Wind and Microclimate

10 APPRAISAL

10.1 Principle of development

- 10.1.1 The provisions of CS Policy EC3 are a material consideration and need to be assessed. Colleagues in the Data & Intelligence team have confirmed that as at 31st March 2024 there was a total office supply of 1.02 million square metres, compared to the Core Strategy requirement (Spatial Policy 9 and table at paragraph 5.2.45) of 706,250sqm. On this basis, the proposal satisfies EC3 Part A (i) because there is an adequate supply of sites to replace the loss of the premises. Officers therefore consider that the principle of loss of employment use at this site may be accepted based on the existing office supply (based on current data at the time of this enquiry).
- 10.1.2 Policy CC1 of the Core Strategy supports the creation of residential dwellings in the City Centre on the proviso that they provide sufficient amenity for occupiers and do not prejudice the other functions of the City Centre. Officers therefore consider student residential use can be accepted here in principle / land use terms, subject to detailed planning considerations.
- 10.1.3 Core Strategy policy H6B is relevant. It is considered the development could help to take the pressure off private and family housing, which satisfies the first and second tests of the policy. In relation to the third test, a future planning application will need to provide a fuller understanding of how the scheme contributes to student bed-space numbers but does not create or add to an excessive concentration of this type of use in the area. As highlighted in the enquiry's supporting literature, this geographical area features a number of new PBSA type developments predominantly (but not exclusively) to areas west of the site and its immediate locality and emerging student developments at Brotherton House (under construction), Yorkshire Post (consented), Lisbon Street (under construction) and the adjacent change of use and extension of Exchange Court (under construction).

Officers advise that an excessive concentration is not purely a consideration of the number of students but also the potential impact of the student use on the wellbeing of existing occupiers. In the case of this site, officers consider the site's location a

mixed-use area already comprising social housing, shops, hotels, offices and the aforementioned PBSA's. The site is close to an area of urban parkland and the area to the south of the site dominated by large scale highway infrastructure. This diversity in the character of the area will also assist in the avoidance of a mono-culture and it is considered a student accommodation use would sit comfortably within such varied surroundings.

- 10.1.4 The fourth test requires an assessment in respect of distances to the University areas. Safe walking routes to the universities and colleges will be clearly identified and assessed as part of subsequent formal application submission and consulted upon in conjunction with West Yorkshire Police. Where any deficiencies in the quality of these routes exist in terms of lighting and safety, improvements will be sought through the formal application process to mitigate for the increases in use from what is a not insignificant increase in pedestrian throughput resulting from circa 717 new student bed-spaces (within what is a mixed use area but with a significant and well established residential component). The distance to the two main universities is 20 minutes walking time with minimal residential areas being walked through (Duncombe Street, Marlborough Street, Park Lane, Hanover Way, Woodhouse Square, Clarendon Road). Furthermore, there are natural and engineered geographic deterrents in place to discourage students from walking through the adjacent Marlborough Social Housing area (land level difference, steps and retaining walling, fencing and gating) On this basis, providing the above is clearly demonstrated officers consider this site would meet the requirements of the test

Subject to confirmation of detailed proposals do Members support the proposed end use of the site for Purpose Built Student Accommodation?

10.2 Climate Change

Fully formed proposals are not yet available given that the proposals are not yet at a formal application stage. However, the applicant has stated their intention to meet the city's adopted Core Strategy energy policies whilst also pursuing a BREEAM excellent accreditation. Furthermore, the underlying topography of the site and proposed building forms will allow for suitable areas of flat roofscape to site renewable energy provisions such as heat pumps and solar PV without significant visual impacts. These matters will be given the appropriate assessment as part of a full application.

10.3 Design and Townscape

- 10.3.1 As noted at paragraphs 4.1-4.4, the proposals have been through a staged series of design workshops with close consultation involved with the design team. The final iteration before members has received the following feedback from the design officer. At this stage it is important to recognise that the façade design, materiality and treatments are still being discussed and the scheme brought to members is intended to capture opinions on the overall scale, massing and principle of development before detailed design work is undertaken, particularly with reference to the external façade treatments.

- 10.3.2 The site is not in an area designated by the Tall Buildings Design Guide as either appropriate or inappropriate for tall buildings. The proposed building would be a part 20, part, 14 part 11, part 9 storey building and therefore at it's tallest point of height is considered to be a tall building. Consequently, a contextual analysis has been proposed and will be presented to members by the developer. It is considered that the fundamental principle that the site and its immediate environment to the north of the A58 are a different character to the emerging 'West End' (Bridge House, Lisbon

Street, Yorkshire Post) in terms of approved heights and this site could not be supported for a building of close scale to those developments in townscape terms.

- 10.3.3 It is noted that large scale highway infrastructure, presence of less sensitive uses to the south and lack of active frontage to either the A58 and Marlborough Street (as well as the underlying topography of a fall in level from north down to south) provide a steer towards the siting of the scheme's taller elements of built form toward the south of the site. The inclusion of a new active frontage to both the western and southern elevations to improve the overall pedestrian experience is also considered to be the correct approach here. It is considered with respect to both the A58 footway and Marlborough Street there are substantial benefits to animating the south western corner here, not least of all to help mitigate for the loss of trees and provide better natural surveillance onto what are two somewhat anonymous routes.
- 10.3.4 The starting point in choices of building design and site assembly by assessing the site in relation to city centre wide / local heritage assets follows the approach taken at other nearby developments and is correct. This approach has gone on to underpin the choices made with regard to heights and site layout with heritage impacts and impacts on key views. The regular testing of the design in isometric / virtual / city views is considered particularly helpful.
- 10.3.5 Concerns were initially expressed about the height of the proposals relative to structures such as the Ibis-hotel and Marlborough Towers. This partly related to the prospect of 'flattening' the cityscape, preventing the underlying topography from being read. While this remains a background issue, the tallest element currently reads as a singular point of height which can be refined through facade treatment and the general scale is commensurate with neighbouring structures such as the Ibis - Therefore, officers consider the overall scale is considered reasonable.
- 10.3.6 The shoulder block to the east of the tall element may require further refinement to avoid appearing somewhat slab-like. It may be possible to address this through the architectural treatments and more work is required on this part of the design process.
- 10.3.7 While the height of the proposed rear block is an important issue in terms of the residential amenity of occupiers of blocks within the Marlborough Estate, officers consider that in part, it may be exacerbated by the abrupt nature of the visual change and this must be properly considered and resolved. The design of building here could potentially bring the prospect of a resident looking out onto a sheer wall of building to the south, something that could potentially appear oppressive. - Work on this potential impact is ongoing at the time of this report. The latest version on which members views are sought sees the height of the building's northern wing reduce alongside the use of a greater degree of setback to the roadway (which in turn allows for the creation of a pocket park area not initially envisaged). A step in the Duncombe Street elevation is also proposed to reduce monosyllabism.
- 10.3.8 With a rapidly increasing population either side of the inner ring road and a new mixed-use district emerging along Kirkstall Road, Duncombe Street (with its bridge connection), is likely to become a significant pedestrian route in future years. The establishment of a generous green edge, linking through to Marlborough Playground is potentially highly beneficial for the pedestrian realm. Setting the building back also reduces the impact of shading and creates a positive counterpoint to the harder, more urban treatment along the A58. The improvements to the adjacent Exchange Court building bring improvements to the green edge to Duncombe Street leading to the existing park area as part of that permission and a future landscaping scheme at this enquiry site would add to that arrangement. A pocket park area has been proposed

by dint of officer negotiations to set the Duncombe Street elevation of the new building further back from the roadway than was originally proposed. This pocket park would feature as one end of a green ribbon buffering this site and Exchange Court from the roadway between the new pocket park area and existing park / play area to the east.

10.3.9 Re-establishing the building line and locating the main entrance to Marlborough Street is considered positive. There would be an active edge to the street, tree planting to establish a human scale, and the levels have been addressed in a pragmatic manner providing seating opportunities and level access, creating something more of a street scape than the currently anonymous nature of this route.

10.3.10 Whilst further work is required on the detailed façade treatments and materiality, officers consider the approach to concentrate the point of height to the south of the site, provision of a double storey height active frontage to the A58, formation of a new active frontage to Marlborough Street and a careful consideration of the block form of the northern wing of the building and its relationship to the Marlborough estate to preserve outlook and amenity to existing residents is supported and, should form the basis and fundamentals of the next design stage.

Do Members support the emerging appearance, scale and setting to the proposed building?

10.4 Residential Amenity (occupiers)

10.4.1 The emerging SPD advises amenity space should be delivered for residents at 1sqm per bedspace (therefore 717 sqm is a suitable minimum providing that the supplied spaces are suitable for this function). The proposed development provides the following provisions in this regard and is therefore seen to be compliant with the emerging guidance in spatial terms.

- 1443 m² internal amenity spaces (Incl. Lower Ground, Ground and Level 13 Amenity Spaces) -spatially approximately double the emerging SPD criteria
- External courtyarded ‘garden’ area (privately accessed for residents only) 700sqm
- Duncombe Street Pocket Park 300sqm

10.4.2 The specific functions of the internal amenity spaces have not yet been designated on plan however as with most PBSA developments these are likely to be determined by an operator and commonly take the form of Residents Lounges, TV snug, Fitness Suite, Dinner Party Room, and a study / touchdown spaces. The space at ground floor / lower ground floor shown on plan to accommodate these as yet unspecified functions are generously sized. It is further noted that the reception / management suite is shown as located directly by the entrance to ensure the main ground floor resident areas can easily be observed and monitored and residents must pass the reception to access the lifts to individual units allowing an opportunity for onsite staff to monitor the comings and goings of residents - which is important for monitoring their overall welfare.

10.4.3 The following room arrangement is proposed:

Unit type	Indicative bedroom size (sqm)	SPD bedroom size (sqm)	Emerging Policy Compliant
Cluster bedroom	13.3	11.5-14	Y
Type 1 studio	20.3	20-28	Y
Type 1 premium	24	20-28	Y

Type 2 studio	22.3	20-28	Y
Type 2 premium	28.6	20-28	Y
Adaptable Studio	31	22-30	Y

It is considered each unit is appropriately sized and will be supplemented by spacious and diverse elements of internal amenity provisions. It is further noted that the development will include a substantial external amenity area in the form of a garden space and seating which is considered positive as well as upstream benefits from the activity in these spaces on natural surveillance around the site. It is considered all rooms will have sufficient space for day to day living functions in excess of the emerging minimum standards. Following assessment, it is considered all private residential spaces and rooms will benefit from an outlook and adequate receipt of daylight and sunlight.

10.5 Residential Amenity (neighbours)

- 10.5.1 The principal consideration of any future application for this site (in terms of the residential amenity of occupiers outside of the development itself) is likely to be the relationship between the new building (and it's associated occupiers) and the adjacent well established housing estate (The Marlboroughs) which is located to the north. The adjacent estate is sited aloft a high sided plinth / retaining wall which hosts a series of undercroft type garages to the Duncombe Street road-edge. Notwithstanding their raised position, the new PBSA building would be much taller than their less commanding four storey form.
- 10.5.2 As a result, the proposals and their evolution (which has since first submission seen two step backs of the northern wing from Duncombe Street to create better separation) have had clear regard to preserving a good standard of amenity not only for the established occupier but conversely the occupier of the new building. The design process so far and received revisions in the enquiry process have recognised there needs to be a generous level of separation at the site's northern edge in consideration of these neighbouring properties.
- 10.5.3 Based on the latest version of the proposals before members, the northern façade of the new student building would be between 29.2m and 34.7m from the south facing windows of the two most proximate residential blocks within this adjacent estate. There is not a prescriptive distance set out on separation or privacy (window to window distances) appropriate to this scenario in terms of the council's adopted policies. However it should be noted that contextually the level of separation is in substantial exceedance of other established and emerging high rise residential developments in the city centre where separation distances are more typically between 15 to 20m. As a result it is considered that the amenities of future and existing occupiers will be adequately safeguarded within the context of a high density city centre urban grain.

Do members support the emerging relationship to the existing residential premises to the north?

10.6 Highways and Transportation

- 10.6.1 Highways officers have been consulted at the various stages of the negotiations / design workshops and have advised the following:
- 10.6.2 It should be demonstrated the proposals comply with the accessibility standards set out in the Core Strategy. A Transport Statement should be provided at any future planning application stage and must include an assessment against the accessibility criteria as set out in Appendix 3 of the Core Strategy and an assessment of walking and cycle routes to/from the site and identification of any gaps in provision and improvements required.
- 10.6.3 The footways around the site appear to be below 2m in width. This development will be expected to provide at least 2m wide footways and resurfacing works around the site, with dedication of land for this provision as required. The pre-application plans show vehicular access into the development to remain via the access of Duncombe Street. This access is shared with the site (Exchange Court) to the East. Additional information will be required at planning application stage regarding the interface between both developments. The proposal also appears to narrow the vehicular access, it must be demonstrated that the vehicle access width is suitable, and continuous footway should be provided into and across the access. Adequate pedestrian into the site access is required, with a min 2m width, separate from the vehicle access.
- 10.6.4 The development would be expected to make a financial contribute to pedestrian and cycling improvements in the vicinity of the site.
- 10.6.6 Any subsequent planning application must provide information regarding existing and proposed levels throughout the site. Ramps provided should be designed in accordance with Inclusive Mobility guidance.
- 10.6.7 A turning head which is also proposed as drop off area is shown in the proposed plans. Vehicle swept path analysis should be provided to demonstrate adequate access, egress and turning manoeuvres within the turning head. Disabled parking spaces should be fitted with EV charging facilities and be in accordance with PAS 1899:2022. The location of the charging points should be shown on the plans and a specification of the charger should be provided.
- 10.6.8 Additional information will be required regarding deliveries and student move in / move out. The student move in / move out should demonstrate there is sufficient drop off / pick up spaces for all students to move in over the course of 2 weekends (worst case scenario). The student management plan would then need to be secured through planning. The proposed site layout shows a 1.5m footpath within the site. This should be at least 2m wide and not lead into carriageway as currently shown. A construction management plan will be required at any subsequent planning application stage and controlled by condition.
- 10.6.9 The proposals do not show any on-site car parking (with the exception of disabled parking). This is likely to be considered acceptable by officers considering the location of the site, however a full assessment on the balance of a full and detailed submission will be made as part of any formal application for the proposed development. A contribution will be taken through a Section 106 for future TROs, should students associated with the development park on-street. An on-street parking survey should be carried out of all streets within 800m of the site and provided at application stage. This should highlight any unrestricted parking or streets covered by single yellow line

parking restrictions. The survey should show the occupancy of these locations and may be used in future to demonstrate the development has increased/resulted in problems regarding the number of vehicles parking on-street. The council will implement TROs with the contribution taken if it can be reasonably demonstrated students from the development site are parking on-street.

- 10.6.10 Notwithstanding the above, the scheme before members proposes to remove a large proportion of the existing car parking which is shared with Exchange Court. Additional information about this and how the removal of car parking is going to be managed will be required at full planning stage. It should be noted that the student residents/staff would not be eligible to any on-street permit parking in the locality.
- 10.6.11 Full details of cycle parking provision must also be supplied with a full application. Given the car free nature of the development and the location of the site in relation to the city's educational establishments, amenities of the city centre and availability of safe cycling routes (and those planned in the locality) it is considered a full application should detail suitable sustainable transport provision to be secured through a planning permission, conditions and the Travel Plan.

10.7 Landscape and Trees

- 10.7.1 A key matter for members to consider is the impact of the proposals on the existing quantum and distribution of trees and landscaping at the site. Officers have advised that whilst the removal of a series of trees would enable development, their removal is a significant concern in terms of both visual amenity and the city's agenda on Climate Change. The strong preference is the retention of all trees, particularly where the species provide a contribution to carbon sequestration.
- 10.7.2 The site's south-western corner as exists today features a deep landscaped area which returns (in a thinner channel between building and highway) to Marlborough Street. Within this area are sited a number of mature trees and low level planting. The enquiry and therefore the proposals before members has not included the full suite of supporting information to justify loss of the existing trees however in discussion with the applicant it has been made clear that the view of members will be required given the significance of the loss and that if accepted, appropriate mitigation will be required. This area serves as a positive green buffer between the existing office building and the pedestrian environment and the A58 and therefore there is the question as to whether their loss is outweighed by the benefits of the scheme and whether the scheme can deliver adequate mitigation.
- 10.7.3 Based upon the details provided, it is understood the scheme would result in the loss of 15 trees. Whilst not yet substantiated through a submitted tree survey it is understood 5 of these trees are affected with Ash-dieback and are category U. The Councils most relevant policy on tree retention is policy Land 2 in the Natural Resources and Waste DPD which states:

Where removal of existing trees is agreed in order to facilitate approved development, suitable tree replacement should be provided on a minimum three for one replacement to loss. Such planting will normally be expected to be on site, as part of an overall landscape scheme. Where in certain circumstances on-site planting cannot be achieved, for example due to lack of suitable space in City Centre locations, off-site planting will be sought, or where the lack of suitable opportunity for this exists, an agreed financial contribution will be required for tree planting elsewhere.

If the loss of the existing trees to facilitate the development is supported then the policy requirement to provide replacements on site at a 3-1 ratio cannot be achieved. There is only provision of 25 trees on site rather than 45 as per the ratio.

- 10.7.4 It is however noted that the adjacent parkland to the eastern end of Duncombe Street would come under increased use from the number of residents here and there may be an opportunity to help improve this space through new/additional planting. Subject to members being satisfied that the degree of loss can be accepted, officers and the developer have discussed the use of an offsite sum to be controlled through a section 106 based on CAVAT methodology is an option to address the shortfall against the replacement ratio. At this stage, no firm proposal on this matter has been put into place, pending members views on the matter.

Do members support the loss of trees to facilitate the proposed development in principle on the proviso that appropriate mitigation can be secured for their loss?

10.8 Wind and Microclimate

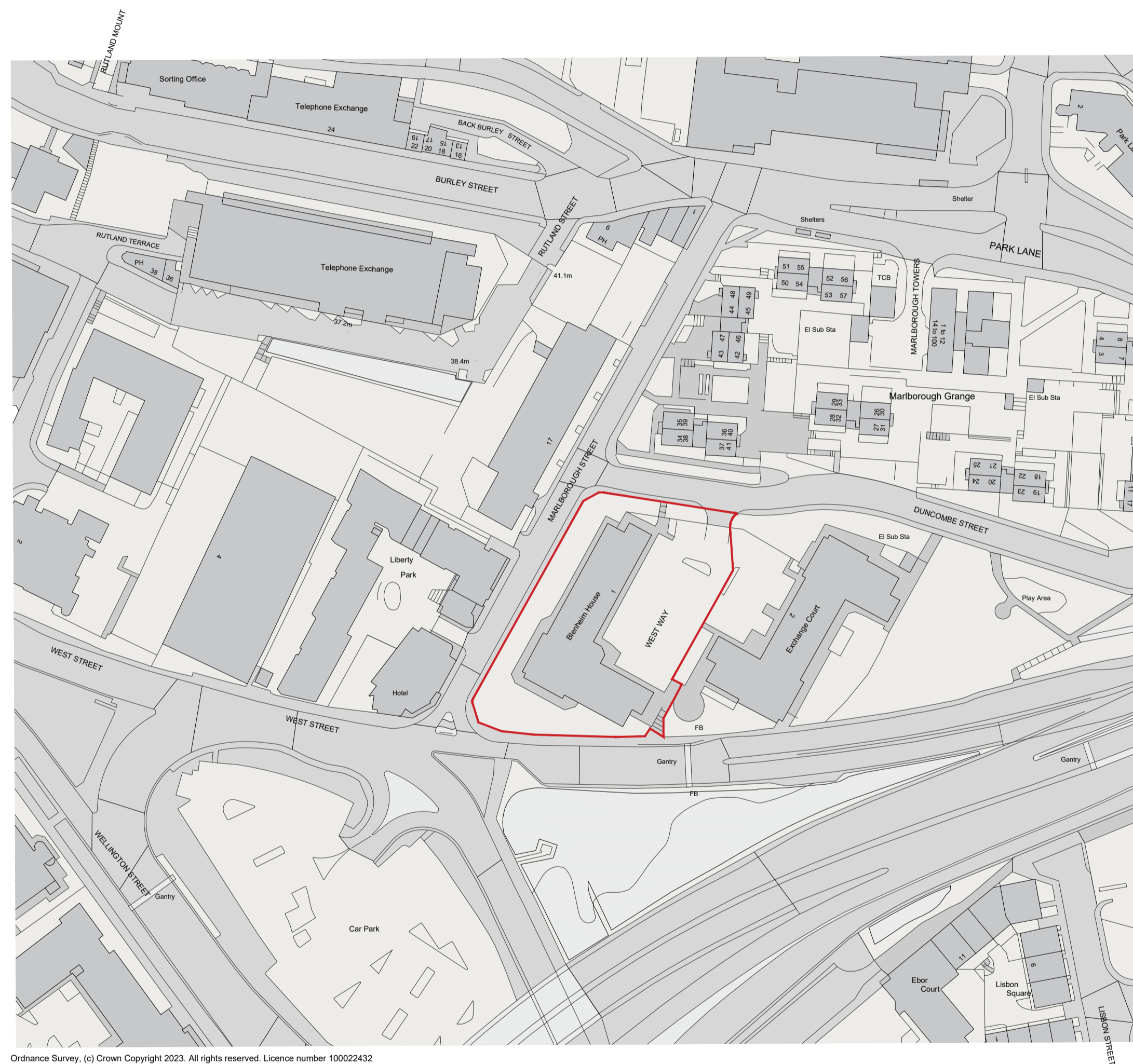
- 10.8.1 The applicant has advised that a wind consultant has been appointed and any future planning application will include a Wind and Microclimate assessment which follows the criteria set out in the (Draft) Wind and Microclimate Toolkit. The applicant is seeking some certainty around the principle of developing the site in the fashion and extents proposed before committing further to this preparation work. A full assessment and peer review of this information would therefore be undertaken as part of the full application.

11. **QUESTIONS TO MEMBERS**

1. **Subject to confirmation of detailed proposals do Members support the proposed end use of the site for Purpose Built Student Accommodation**
2. **Do Members support the emerging appearance, scale and setting to the proposed building?**
3. **Do members support the emerging relationship to the existing residential premises to the north?**
4. **Do members support the loss of trees to facilitate the proposed development in principle on the proviso that appropriate mitigation can be secured for their loss?**

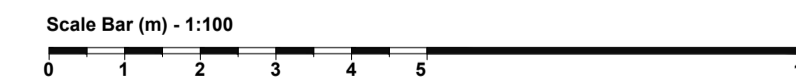
BACKGROUND PAPERS:

Pre application working file PREAPP/24/00010



Ordnance Survey, (c) Crown Copyright 2023. All rights reserved. Licence number 100022432

Location Plan



GENERAL NOTES:
 DAY Architectural Ltd accepts no responsibility for any costs, losses or claims whatsoever arising from these drawings, specifications and related documents unless there is full compliance with the Client or any unauthorised user of the following:

1. All boundaries, dimensions and levels are to be checked on site before construction and any discrepancies reported to the Architect / Designer.
2. Partial Services: Any discrepancies with site or other information is to be advised to the Architect / Designer and direction and / or approval is to be sought before the implementation of the detail.
3. Block and site plans are reproduced under license from the Ordnance Survey.
4. Do not scale this drawing.
5. For the purpose of coordination, all relevant parties must check this information prior to implementation and report any discrepancies to the Architect / Designer.

DRAWING NOTES:

CLIENT
 Balfour Beatty Investments

PROJECT
 Blenheim House, Leeds

DRAWING
 Site Location Plan

SCALE 1:1250@A1 **PAPER SIZE** A1

DATE 10.01.24 **DRAWN BY** NOD

DRAWING No. DAY - SK001 **REVISION** **PROJECT No.** 1007

DRAWING STATUS INFORMATION

Information contained on this drawing is the sole copyright of DAY Architectural Ltd, and is not to be reproduced without their permission.



DAY ARCHITECTURAL LTD.
 STUDIO 1, LANCASTER BUILDING,
 DEANS GATE,
 MANCHESTER, M3 2BW.

T: 0161 834 9703
 E: info@day-architectural.com
 W: www.day-architectural.com