

CITY PLANS PANEL

THURSDAY, 10TH AUGUST, 2023

PRESENT: Councillor J McKenna in the Chair

Councillors C Campbell, B Anderson,
D Blackburn, K Brooks, K Dye, C Gruen,
A Khan, J Bowden and R Jones

18 Appeals Against Refusal of Inspection of Documents

There were no appeals.

19 Exempt Information - Possible Exclusion of Press and Public

There was no exempt information.

20 Late Items

There were no late items.

21 Declaration of Interests

There were no declarations.

22 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Carlill, Cohen and Maloney.

Councillors Bowen and Jones were in attendance as substitutes.

23 Minutes

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting held on 13 July 2023 be confirmed as a correct record.

24 Application 22-06503-FU - Land to the east of St Cecilia Street, Leeds

The report of the Chief Planning Officer presented a position statement on a development of 78 affordable apartments in an 11-storey building with associated cycle, bin and concierge space.

Members visited the site prior to the meeting and site plans and photographs were displayed and referred to throughout the discussion of the application.

Further issues highlighted in relation to the application included the following:

- The proposals were for a 100% affordable housing scheme.
- The site was well connected to public transport, the city centre and other amenities.
- The site was small and constrained by development on all sides. It had previously used a car park and was bounded by the SOYO scheme to the South and the Northern Ballet Centre to the south.

- The site had been specifically identified to deliver affordable housing in the city centre.
- The development would be available for those on the Leeds Housing Register and there was a critical need to provide homes available at social rent levels.
- There would be a mix of 1, 2 and 3 bedroom apartments.
- The construction would be of a light coloured masonry with some dark brickwork and floor to ceiling windows.
- There would be wind baffles within the site and would ensure safety to the entrance areas.
- There would be a new layby off St Cecilia street which would serve drop off and pick up as well as serving. There would not be any car parking. Cycle parking would be provided within the building.
- Separation distances between the proposed building and existing buildings were relatively low compared to general guidelines, but there were no policy requirements on separation distances in the city centre and examples of other similar relationships between buildings in the city were displayed.
- A daylight and sunlight report had been submitted and it was felt that light levels would be acceptable.
- There would be some impact on the Northern Ballet Centre with some overlooking. This would be mitigated with obscure glazing.
- Floor plans were displayed. The ground floor would include a reception area, plant equipment and three apartments.
- There was no requirement to provide outdoor space but open space was available in adjoining development areas and public parks were within 5 minute walking distance. There was a small, terraced area for the ground floor apartments.
- Housing mix – there would be 46 x one bedroom, 28 x two bedroom and 4 x three bedroom apartments. Although the number of three bedroom apartments was below the preferred target, there were no policy requirement. Elsewhere across the ward and adjoining wards there were higher levels of 3 bedroom affordable housing units. The data available showed there was a higher demand for 1 and 2 bedroom apartments within the city centre.
- The proposals presented a higher ratio of affordable housing than policy required.
- There had been three formal objections which included the building design and from Northern Ballet regarding access to their car park and overlooking.

The applicant was invited to address the Panel. Issues highlighted included the following:

- The applicant had a record of delivering affordable housing.
- The proposals would deliver 78 social rent units to people currently on the Council's housing list and would meet genuine needs.
- The company's vision was for people to have good quality homes which were affordable and sustainable.

- The scheme was energy efficient and would link to the district heating scheme.
- The scheme would use high quality materials and national space standards would be exceeded.
- The scheme would contribute to the Council objectives in delivering affordable homes.
- The housing mix addresses the needs within this area of the city.
- All apartments met space and accessibility requirements.
- All 2 and 3 bedroom apartments would have juliette balconies and the ground floor apartments had external amenity space.
- Separation distances were appropriate for the location.
- The scheme relied on a Homes England grant and needed to be delivered by March 2026.

In response to questions from the Panel, the following was discussed:

- Housing demand for families – there was not a demand for 3 bed flats within the city centre but there was a demand for 3 bed houses.
- Rents would be below local housing allowance levels and market rates. A one bed room would be £112 per week.
- Security – access to the ground floor apartments would be via the main lobby area and there would be CCTV and access-controlled entrance. There would also be a caretaker/concierge presence.
- Cycle parking – provision could be increased if necessary.
- There would be conditions relating to the materials and design. A request was made for samples of the materials to be made available to Members.
- The service charge would be included in the rent and would be approximately 20 to 25% of the rent.
- Details of demand for one and two bedrooms from the surrounding wards.
- Connectivity from the site to other areas of the city.
- There would be planting round the boundary where possible but there were constraints due to space.
- Concern regarding lack of play facilities for children. It was reported that the development was well located for nearby facilities and would be suitable for families.

In response to comments from the Panel, discussion included the following:

- The principle of a large number of affordable units was very positively received.
- The housing mix seems acceptable with regard to the pressure for one and two bedroom properties.
- Concern regarding the lack of landscaping and open space.
- The need for amenity space for young people.
- Concern that there should be more three bedroom apartments available.

Members were asked to consider questions that were outlined in the report. The following was discussed:

- Members generally considered the housing mix to be acceptable but there was concern regarding the lack of three bedroom units in the city centre.
- Members generally considered the proposed design to be acceptable but reiterated concerns about the lack of greenspace and outdoor amenity areas.
- Members generally considered the separation distances to the Northern Ballet Centre and SOYO block to be acceptable. There were concerns that it was tight and there had been objections from Northern Ballet.
- Members generally considered the ground floor flats acceptable in terms of outlook and residential amenity but further detail would be welcomed.

Members discussed whether the application should be determined under delegated powers. Further discussion included the previous concerns regarding design and materials but mainly greenspace. Further discussion involved the need for a layby and whether this could be removed or modified to include tree planting.

Members were asked to vote on whether the application could be deferred and delegated to the Chief Planning Officer for approval providing there was further work to increase cycle storage and greenspace, and a review of the need for the layby and exploration of tree planting in this area instead.

RESOLVED – That the application be deferred for officers to consider the matters raised relating to cycle storage, green space and trees in lieu of the layby, and thereafter be delegated to the Chief Planning Officer for approval.

25 PREAPP 22 00095 - Latitude Yellow, land at the former Doncaster Monk Bridge Works, Whitehall Road, Leeds

The report of the Chief Planning Officer presented a pre-application enquiry for an office development with associated facilities, parking and landscaping at Latitude Yellow, land at the former Doncaster Monk Bridge Works, Whitehall Road, Leeds.

Members visited the site prior to the meeting and site plans and photographs were displayed and referred to throughout the discussion of the application.

The applicant's representatives were invited to address the Panel. Issues highlighted included the following:

- The applicant showed examples of other schemes that they had delivered across the country.
- The site currently had a planning approval for an office development but the applicant felt that was no longer appropriate particularly in

terms of sustainability and following the Council's climate emergency commitment.

- It was hoped that the new scheme would be one of the most, if not most, sustainable schemes in Leeds. To achieve this, amendments since the previous application included the removal of the proposal for a basement and to have fewer lifts in the building. Sustainability would not only be increased by reduced operational energy but also with increased biodiversity. There would be garden spaces, green walls and a roof terrace.
- Sustainable travel would be promoted with integration to the cycle network and cycle facilities.
- There would be a gym and fitness centre as well as an event space to promote health and wellbeing.
- The site was the last part of the wider Latitude masterplan to be delivered.
- Connectivity through the site and wider area.
- The building would be ground floor plus eleven storeys in height. The previous consent was ten storeys.
- There had been positive feedback from community consultation that had been undertaken. This had included Leeds Civic Trust and local neighbours.
- Inspiration had been taken from the industrial heritage of the site.
- There would be hard and soft landscaping around the building. Detailed landscaping images were shown.
- There would be limited parking to the undercroft.
- The ground floor would include a café, co-working spaces and cycle storage.
- There would be a gym and fitness suite on the first floor.
- Upper floors would be mainly dedicated to office space.
- There would be external communal space on the roof terrace.
- CGI images of the proposed building were displayed and proposed use of materials was explained.

In response to questions and comments from the Panel, discussion included the following:

- There would be dedicated cycle and pedestrian routes through the site.
- There had been some widening of the highway for cycle provision. Further development of the highway and cycle/pedestrian provision was explained.
- There had been engagement with Network Rail with regards to the boundary between the site and the railway.
- Landscaping would include planting, green walls and open areas.
- The area would be extensively covered by CCTV and there would be 24 hour security.
- There would be allowances to connect to the district heating network in the future if that became possible. It was currently proposed to use air source heat pumps and photovoltaics to power the building.
- The cycle route would have access to the tow path.

- It was hoped to reflect the heritage of the site with the materials to be used and any further information on the heritage of the site would be welcomed. It was hoped to use as much recycled material as possible.
- There would be noise assessments carried.
- It was hoped to see some kind of recognition of the history of the site.
- Members welcomed the proposals for the roof terrace and sustainability issues.

In response to questions outlined in the report, the following was discussed.

- Members considered that the proposed use of the site for office with ground floor café/workspace was appropriate in principle.
- Members supported the emerging layout, scale and design of the development.
- Members supported the emerging public pedestrian route and landscaping around the site.
- Members welcomed the proposals for active travel.

RESOLVED – That the report and presentation be noted.

26 Date and Time of Next Meeting

Thursday, 7th September 2023 at 1.30 p.m.