

CITY PLANS PANEL

THURSDAY, 22ND OCTOBER, 2020

PRESENT: Councillor J McKenna in the Chair

Councillors D Blackburn, C Campbell,
P Carlill, D Cohen, A Garthwaite, C Gruen,
P Gruen, G Latty, A Khan, E Nash,
P Wadsworth and N Walshaw

47 Appeals Against Refusal of Inspection of Documents

There were no appeals against the refusal of inspection of documents.

48 Exempt Information - Possible Exclusion of Press and Public

There were no items identified where it was considered necessary to exclude the press or public from the meeting due to the confidential nature of the business to be considered.

49 Late Items

There were no late items of business identified.

50 Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

There were no declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests made at the meeting.

51 Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies for absence.

52 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the previous meetings held on 25th September and 1st October 2020 were submitted for comment/ approval.

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the previous meetings held on 25th September and 1st October 2020 be accepted as a true and correct record.

53 Matters Arising from the Minutes

There were no issues raised under Matters Arising.

54 Application No. 19/05833/FU - Retrospective permission for temporary use (5 years) as a car park and associated site works at site of the

former White Stag Public House, Whitelock Street, Sheepscar, Leeds, LS7 1AL

The Chief Planning Officer submitted a report which set out details of an application which sought full retrospective planning permission for temporary use (5 years) as a car park and associated site works at site of the former White Stag Public House, Whitelock Street, Sheepscar, Leeds, LS7 1AL

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

The City Centre Team Leader addressed the Panel, speaking in detail about the proposal and highlighted the following:

- Site / location / context
- The site is approximately 900sqm and is unallocated within the Development Plan
- The proposal is to regularise the current unauthorised use as car parking, hosting 21 car parking spaces with a further 6 car parking bays intended for car share use (The unauthorised car park use had been operating since December 2018)
- The current operation provides staff car parking to near-by Northgate House, who consider this to be “Private Non Residential (PNR) parking provision
- The office use associated with the users of the car parking is not considered unique
- The car park site is located within the “Fringe Area” of the parking zones designated in the Leeds Parking SDP
- Access to the site is from Sheepscar Grove
- The main public car parks within the vicinity of the site have capacity for 4600 vehicles
- The site is located to near-by public transport provision

The City Centre Team Leader explained that the report of the Chief Planning Officer recommended refusal of the application because the use of the car park would undermine the Councils objectives to restrict commuter car parking and private non-residential car parking in this central location and reduce reliance on the private car, minimise road congestion and promote more sustainable modes of transport contrary to Core Strategy Policies T1 and T2 and Leeds City Council’s Parking SPD

The Panel heard from Mr David Smith (Applicant’s Representative) and Councillor Abigail Marshall-Katung (Local Ward Councillor) who spoke in support of the proposal

Mr Smith said the officer’s report to Panel was a detailed and balanced assessment of the proposal and the applicant did understand the reasons why the report was being recommended for refusal, However, Park Lane Properties believe there is some flexibility in this instance. The flexible approach is consistent with Policy LPP3 which is permissive of a temporary

car park in this fringe area. The Park Lane Group had been operating from their current office location since 2018 and it was acknowledged by the applicant that regularising the use of the land as a car park was an oversight. Due to the nature of the business above average car parking was required. Staff working across the individual brands under the Parklane umbrella need to visit other locations across the country, often at short notice and return with ease, without the need to forward plan such visits, leading to unpredictable staff movements.

Mr Smith said the use of the former White Stag site as a temporary car park for five years was key to the success of the Company's operations. Currently only 4 spaces were available to Park Lane Properties within Northgate House's undercroft car park. Mr Smith expressed concern about crime within the area (both to person and vehicle) and said the proximity and management of the car park may assist in mitigating such issues.

The applicant also suggested that the temporary provision of a car park would allow time for the bedding in of a travel plan to run in tandem with the duration of the permission, seeking to reduce the business's dependency on car travel.

Councillor A Marshall-Katung said the Little London and Woodhouse ward suffers from parking issues because of its close proximity to the city centre. She said we had already heard that the company had a number of offices around the country which necessitates travel to and from the Leeds based Head Office, having dedicated parking for the company would be a valued added benefit.

Members were informed there were high levels of crime in the area and it was a concern to the Park Lane Group. As the Ward Councillor for the area Councillor Marshall-Katung said she could understand why they want this dedicated parking area, which is not permanent parking but only a temporary solution, this land is already owned by the company and it is intended that this land would be developed in the future.

The covid-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on not just this company but also others in the area, granting this application would assist the company in recovering from the pandemic.

Questions to Mr D Smith (Applicant Representative) and Councillor A Marshall-Katung:

- The application is recommended for refusal, why do the reasons you've put forward for granting the application i.e. the implications of Covid 19, outweigh the reasons of refusal
- The application is seeking temporary permission for 5 years, would you consider a less period of time e.g. 3 years

In responding Mr D Smith and Councillor A Marshall-Katung said

- As a consequence of the Coronavirus many people are worried about travelling on public transport and would prefer to use their own vehicles when travelling from one site to another
- The applicant's representative confirmed that it may be possible to reduce the proposed temporary 5 year period, an assessment of use would need to be undertaken

The Chair thanked Mr D Smith and Councillor A Marshall-Katung for their attendance and contributions.

Members raised the following questions to officers:

- Had officers considered the implications of the covid pandemic
- If the application was to be refused, as recommended, it could lead to parking elsewhere in the area, could officers work with the Developer to seek a reduction to the requested 5 year period to allow travel planning measures to be established

In responding to the issues raised, officers said:

- Although the Covid pandemic has seen a fall in the use of public transport in the short term the long term implications of the pandemic are unknown and the City Council has a well-established and long term Transport Strategy which seeks to restrict growth in the use of the private car in favour of promoting more sustainable modes of transport, improving air quality and minimising road congestion. If the application was to be granted it would undermine those long term principles.
- Officers had noted the submission of a travel plan but it was difficult to achieve good travel habits and attain targets whilst employees have access to free car parking. Public car parking facilities were available in the area together with other, more sustainable public transport options. Therefore the proposal for a temporary consent whilst travel plan measures are established is not considered to outweigh the adverse impact on the council's adopted transport strategy

In offering comments Members raised the following issues:

- One Member was supportive of the Council's objectives to restrict commuter parking, the concerns about travelling on public transport during a pandemic were insufficient
- Although normally supportive of the Council's objectives, other Members had concerns about using public transport during a pandemic
- One Member suggested that Government advice was to avoid public transport
- A number of Members expressed the view that the bus and train companies had provided a valuable Service in difficult times, suggesting that some people had no other options but to use public transport and it was the wrong message to deter people from using public transport

- The majority of Members were supportive of a suggestion to grant temporary planning permission for a 3 year period rather than 5

It was moved and seconded that the application be granted for a temporary period of 3 years subject to the inclusion of a robust travel plan and monitoring fee.

Upon being put to the vote, the motion was passed 12 votes to 1

RESOLVED – That the application be granted for a temporary period of 3 years subject to the inclusion of a robust travel plan and monitoring fee.

55 Application No. 20/02048/FU for the demolition of existing structures, the construction of a new cafe and a cycle hub; a new taxi rank; public realm enhancement works including hard and soft landscaping; improvements to the cycle, pedestrian and multi-modal interchange arrangements; and the installation of new access lift at Bishopgate Street, New Station Street and Mill Goit, Neville Street, and Dark Neville Street, Leeds City Centre. Listed Building Application 20/01996/LI for the demolition of an existing section of wall and the construction of a replacement wall, which will be built into an existing listed wall at Bishopgate Street, New Station Street, Leeds.

With reference to the meeting of 16th July 2020 and the decision to defer and delegate determination of Application No. 20/02048/FU to the Chief Planning Officer for approval subject to the conditions specified in the submitted report (and any others which the Chief Planning Officer considers appropriate) and following further discussions with the developer concerning access issues, in particular the provision of level access to the taxi rank on New Station Street and that Application No. 20/01996/LI (Listed Building Consent) be deferred and delegated to the Chief Planning Officer for approval subject to the conditions specified in the submitted report.

The Chief Planning Officer now submitted a report which provided an update on the discussions with the developer with regard to the provision of level access to the taxi rank on New Station Street.

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

The Planning Case Officer addressed the Panel, speaking in detail about the proposal and highlighted the following:

- Site / location / context
- Potential ramp options (Section 8 of the submitted report)
- Consultation – A rolling process of meetings to ensure all groups had a voice
- Constraints of the site

Members were informed that exploration work had been undertaken by the Applicant in relation to the potential other access options, as detailed in section 8 of the submitted report which demonstrated that none of the considered options would be the best answer to addressing the many demands of this scheme.

The report concluded that, on the basis of the findings of the access options report (in Appendix 1), the originally designed scheme, to create the two new 21 person pedestrian lifts and the steps to both sides of the lift/kiosk building, and provide a level access under the Queens hotel portico would bring the optimum solution for addressing accessibility between New Station Street and Bishopgate Street.

Members raised the following questions to officers:

- In respect of the consultation, were disabled groups consulted, in particular, Mr McSharry who previously addressed Panel and spoke about the difficulties for disabled people who used taxis, had he been provided with any reassurance
- Creating a ramp may encourage anti-social use, skateboarders for example

In responding to the issues raised, officers said:

- The LCC Access Officer confirmed that the consultation included a pan disability group which included groups with different disabilities. In respect of Mr McSharry it was reported that 3 meetings had taken place with the group he represented.
- Measures could be incorporated onto the ramp to deter skateboard use but this would be impracticable because the ramp needs to be a smooth service for wheelchair users

In offering comments Members raised the following issues:

- The majority of Members appeared to be satisfied that all necessary groups/ stakeholders had been consulted.
- Members were supportive of the proposal to expand the concourse in front of the station to accommodate more people
- Members expressed the view that although they were not entirely satisfied with the conclusions of the report, they did accept that there were no other alternative solutions which would satisfy everyone
- A small number of Members queried if all options had been explored, could access be achieved from the rear of the station via Aire Street

In responding to the final comment the City Centre Team Leader said provision of level access would be looked at again as part of future proposals to improve the Aire Street entrance but that those proposals would be separate from the scheme before Members

The Chair thanked Members for their contributions

RESOLVED –

- (i) That the contents of the report be noted
- (ii) Although not part of this proposal, the Chief Planning Officer be requested to investigate enhanced level access arrangements via Aire Street as part of the planning considerations for those proposals.

56 **Application No. 19/02081/FU - Development of 322 Dwellings and ancillary flexible commercial space (use class A1, A2, A3, A4, B1 and D1) at land at Ellerby Road and East Street, Cross Green, Leeds.**

The Chief Planning Officer submitted a report which sets out details of an application which sought the development of 322 Dwellings and ancillary flexible commercial space (use class A1, A2, A3, A4, B1 and D1) to land at Ellerby Road and East Street, Cross Green, Leeds.

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

The City Centre Team Leader addressed the Panel, speaking in detail about the proposal and highlighted the following:

- Site / location / context
- Nature and scale of buildings within the City Centre
- 12m rise in levels East Street to Ellerby Road
- Development cut into the hillside
- Grade I Listed Building in vicinity - St Saviour Church which had a dominant presence in the area (Views of the church to be retained from East Street)
- Relationship to Conservation Area
- Proposed materials to reflect the Conservation Area, red brick with bronze detailing and full height glazing
- Full depth recess to windows and recessed brick panels
- Retention of pedestrian access through the site
- Vehicular access to the site would be via Bow Street
- The proposal is for 322 residential dwellings, comprising four blocks across the two sites, blocks ranging in height from 7 – 9 storeys
- Size of the dwellings meet adopted space standards
- Off-site greenspace contribution
- Financial viability assessment undertaken – The District Valuer had confirmed that the provision of 8 affordable units was achievable

The City Centre Team Leader reported the receipt of two further letters of objection from local residents since the panel report was written, raising concerns about the loss of greenspace, the height of the residential blocks and noise during the construction period.

Members raised the following questions:

- Could clarification be provided about the greenspace provision
- Could officers comment on the levels of the site
- Were there any nearby shopping facilities
- The District Valuer's opinion that there are exceptional costs associated with this development, could further clarification be provided
- How far away from the site was the centre of Leeds
- The elevational treatment appears to be a priority over the affordable housing provision, why was this strategy been pursued
- There appears to be no provision for solar panels, electric vehicle charging points, and what was the fuel source of the development
- Who would be responsible for the maintenance of the greenspace

In responding to the issues raised, officers said:

- The proposal delivers less than the required greenspace provision on site but Council policy allows for any deficit in on-site provision to be mitigated by an off-site financial contribution which will be used to enhance the nearby Bow Street recreation ground in this case
- Members were informed that the proposal complied with landscape standards for accessibility
- The proposal provides an opportunity for commercial space (shops), other existing local shopping is located at the Leeds Docks or is planned for at the Copperfield site
- The District Valuer said the development was in a sensitive heritage setting and construction costs were high due to the type of materials to be used and the approach to detailing (Red brick). Similar Private Rented Schemes (PRS) in other areas use composite panelling resulting in lower build costs
- Members were informed the site was just outside the core of the city centre, Leeds Docks and the Ibis Hotel junction were a 10 minute walk away
- The City Centre Team Leader explained that the elevational treatment was not being prioritised over affordable housing provision. There were other costs associated with the development that were also affecting the financial viability position. However the quality and approach to the elevational treatment was welcomed and considered necessary to preserve the heritage setting
- The applicant explained that in addition to the costs associated with building in a heritage setting, there were a number of significant other costs: the diversion of two large public sewers, gas fired combination heat source and power for the common areas, possible connection to the district heating system (subject to further negotiations) that's why solar panels had not been included, looking at the scheme as a whole. 31 electric vehicle charging points were already proposed, difficult to increase this number because additional electricity sub stations would

be necessary resulting in the reduction of car parking spaces and rental levels

- Members were informed that the developers would be responsible for the maintenance of the on-site greenspace

In offering comments Members raised the following issues:

- Some Members welcomed the use of red brick in a heritage setting
- A number of Members expressed concern that the proposed elevational treatment had no distinct character, the design and approach to the courtyard parking was underwhelming and more greening of the site was required particularly to the East Street frontage
- Members were of the view that this was a rapidly changing area which would look very different in a few years-time and as a result a different design approach could be considered to improve the financial viability position
- Members welcomed the principle of development, but alternative design solutions were required including the use of different materials, the provision of more greenspace and more affordable housing

It was moved and seconded that the application be deferred to allow further discussions to take place around alternative design solutions including; the use of different materials, the provision of more greenspace and more affordable housing.

Upon being put to the vote the motion was passed 12 votes to 1

RESOLVED – That the application be deferred to allow further discussions to take place around alternative design solutions including; the use of different materials, the provision of more greenspace and more affordable housing.

57 PREAPP/19/00530 - Pre-application presentation for the proposed demolition of existing office building and student residential accommodation development on the site of Arena Point, Merrion Way, Leeds LS2 8PA

The Chief Planning Officer submitted a report which sets out detail of a Pre-application presentation for the proposed demolition of an existing office building and the development of residential student accommodation on the site of Arena Point, Merrion Way, Leeds LS2 8PA.

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
- The site located within the area identified for tall buildings

- The proposal to demolish existing 19 storey building and replace with 43 storey purpose built student accommodation
- Elegant slender building in design
- Accommodation to consist of studio flats and cluster flats, 694 student bed-spaces in total
- New building to occupy a similar footprint to existing building
- Materials; smooth white metal cladding with shimmer, metal infill panels, moulded panels at street level, deep reveals, and full height windows to all rooms
- Main entrance located on Merrion Way at ground floor level
- The northern half of the building at ground floor level would contain bin store, a bike store, substation and generator room together with disabled parking spaces
- Amenity space 970sqm
- Improve public realm around the site, 3m wide pavements
- New specimen trees
- Drop off and deliveries on Brunswick Terrace
- Wind mitigation measures (Baffles)

Members raised the following questions:

- Was the existing building currently in use
- Members questioned the demand for purpose built student accommodation in light of the coronavirus pandemic and the likelihood that international students may not return in large numbers
- What were the room sizes for each type of accommodation

In responding to the issues raised, the applicant's representatives said:

- Members were informed that the existing building was in use, with an occupancy rate of 40% prior to the Covid-19 lockdown
- The applicant suggested the building would come online in approximately 4 years-time, "when we may be in less strange times". If student demand is low the building could be reconfigured to residential accommodation
- Members were informed that studio flats were 21sqm and the 6 bedroom cluster flats have 28sqm living/kitchen spaces

In offering comments Members raised the following issues:

- Members were generally supportive of the scheme suggesting the design was elegant, impressive, well-proportioned and would make a positive statement to the street scene.
- Some Members considered that the "Studio Flat" was too small, there was not enough space for occupants to sit for relaxation.
- A number of Members welcomed more purpose built student accommodation within the City Centre

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

- Members were of the view that the loss of office accommodation and proposed use of the site for student accommodation was acceptable in principle
- Subject to confirmation of the detailed proposals, Members were supportive of the approach towards the living conditions for student accommodation, with the exception of the “Studio Flat” where further clarification was required
- Members considered the proposed mass and form of the development and its relationship with the surrounding context to be acceptable

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

RESOLVED –

- (i) To note the details contained in the pre-application presentation
- (ii) That the developers be thanked for their attendance and presentation

58 Date and Time of Next Meeting

RESOLVED – To note that the next meeting will take place on Thursday, 19th November 2020 at 1.30pm (Remote Meeting)