

CITY PLANS PANEL

THURSDAY, 30TH SEPTEMBER, 2021

PRESENT: Councillor N Walshaw in the Chair

Councillors D Blackburn, K Brooks,
C Campbell, P Carlill, D Cohen, E Nash,
P Wadsworth and S Burke

SITE VISIT

A Members site visit was held in connection with the following applications: PREAPP/21/00259 – residential development at a site on land off Water Lane, Holbeck, Leeds, and Application Nos. 21/01869/FU & 21/01870/LI - Planning Approval and Listed Building Consent to provide upper floor residential apartments with retention of the ground floor for office use, at 2 Great George Street, Leeds and was attended by the following Councillors: K Brooks (for 2 Great George Street only), C Campbell, D Blackburn and N Walshaw.

COMMENT

Prior to the start of the meeting Cllr Walshaw addressed the Plans Panel, advising them that Cllr McKenna was recovering from Covid and Cllr Gruen who would normally deputise for Cllr McKenna was absent due to a family bereavement. Therefore, as an experienced Plans Panel Member and Chair of Development Plans Panel he asked Members if they were agreeable to him being Chair for the Meeting.

RESOLVED - All Members were agreeable and Cllr Walshaw was elected to the Chair for the duration of the meeting.

71 Appeals Against Refusal of Inspection of Documents

There were no appeals against refusal of inspection of documents.

72 Exempt Information - Possible Exclusion of Press and Public

There were no exempt items.

73 Late Items

There were no late items.

74 Declaration of Interests

There were no declarations of interests.

75 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors McKenna, Gruen, Garthwaite and Latty.

Councillors Burke attended the meeting as substitute for Councillor Garthwaite.

Councillor Walshaw attended the meeting as Chair, in absence of Councillor McKenna.

76 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting held on 2nd September 2021 be approved as a correct record.

77 Matters Arising from the Minutes

There were no matters arising.

78 Application Nos. 21/01869/FU & 21/01870/LI - Planning Approval and Listed Building Consent for alterations, including a rooftop extension, and a change of use, to provide 83 residential apartments with retention of the ground floor for office use, at 2 Great George Street, Leeds, LS2 8B.

The Chief Planning Officer submitted a report in relation to a planning application 21/01869/FU and listed building consent application 21/01870/LI for alterations, including a rooftop extension, and change of use, to provide 83 residential apartments with retention of the ground floor for office use, at 2 Great George Street, Leeds, LS2 8B.

Members had visited the site earlier in the day, photographs and slides were shown during the presentation.

Members were provided with the following information:

- The site was a former Victorian school but in recent years had been used as Council offices. The building and its wrought iron railings are Grade II Listed.
- This scheme is separate to proposals for Leonardo and Thoresby Buildings which Members of City Plans Panel had considered and approved on 8th July 2021.
- Since the publishing of the report, Historic England had submitted another representation. It was noted that this was the same as the previous one submitted and which has been detailed in the report.
- The proposals included regeneration and extension of the Grade II Listed building. The proposals included office space at ground level, with cycle storage, with residential dwellings at levels 1 to 7. A resident's gym would be sited at basement level as well as the plant room. It was noted that bins would be screened by fretwork.
- The Listed No.2 Great George Street would be altered internally with the addition of mezzanine floors to add extra space for the creation of new residential dwellings. The existing 20th century entrance would be removed and a new entrance to the west face of the building would be created. A new 3 storey glazed extension would be added to the roof top of the building for further residential accommodation and a communal roof amenity area.
- 83 residential units are proposed of the following types:

- 34 one bedroomed units
- 43 two bedroomed units
- 6 three bedroomed units
- It was noted that 3 of the units would be affordable units.
- The proposal would also create external publicly accessible landscaped space, that would serve as a north-south connection, with seating and planters to the western side of the building. To the east a further landscaped area is to be created for use by the office occupiers in the lightwell fronting Woodhouse Lane.
- It is proposed that the entrance onto Woodhouse Lane would become a secondary entrance for residents.
- Existing lifts would be refurbished.
- A financial viability review had been undertaken and was appended to the submitted report. The District Valuer, Brian Maguire was present at the meeting to answer any questions.

In response to questions from Members, the Plans Panel was informed of the following points:

- Members were advised of the 'Vacant Building Credits' which encourages developers to use such sites as No. 2 Great George Street. It was acknowledged that without the rooftop extension the proposed application would not be financially viable and there would not be any affordable units.
- In relation to the proposed housing mix, the Panel were advised that there was a demand for smaller units in the city centre.
- The building is located in a busy area of the city close to roads and footpaths. Therefore, it was the view of the developers that to mitigate noise the ground floor would be better suited to office space rather than residential units.
- Members requested that the developers and officers discuss the glass rooftop extension, in relation to lessening the distinct dark line edging to parts of the extension.

Members comments included:

- The proposal was better than the previous one.
- Mezzanine floors in Victorian School buildings can look good if done well.
- Mezzanine floors can be difficult to heat. It was noted that at 10.43 of the submitted report it was proposed to link the building to the District Heating System.
- The Panel acknowledged the comments provided by Historic England and the Civic Trust but recognised that to bring the building back into use there was the need to have a rooftop extension and the mezzanine floor insertions.
- The Panel were pleased that the entrance on to Woodhouse Lane would be used as a secondary entrance as this had not been possible whilst in use for offices due to accessibility issues.
- Members were advised that as part of the conditions the brick and pilasters would be cleaned.

- Members requested original features such as the glazed brick and iron works were retained.
- Green space should be meaningful and well maintained. It was noted that the developers were in discussion with the developers of the other scheme to join the green space areas for better use.

It was acknowledged that details of the glass rooftop extension need to be lightweight but that it need to be right.

In relation to affordable housing, it was recognised that the number of affordable units was low, however it was policy compliant.

RESOLVED – To defer and delegate to the Chief Planning Officer as set out in the submitted report.

79 PREAPP/21/00259 - Redevelopment of an existing surface car park to provide 359 residential units in stepped blocks, with associated access, landscaping and parking provision at a site on Land Off Water Lane, Holbeck, Leeds.

The Chief Planning Officer submitted a report for a pre application for a redevelopment of an existing surface car park to provide 359 residential units in stepped blocks, with associated access, landscaping and parking provision at a site on Land Off Water Lane, Holbeck, Leeds.

Members had visited the site earlier in the day, photographs and slides were shown throughout the presentation.

The following attended the meeting to present the application on behalf of McLaren Living and to answer Members questions:

- Matt Biddle – McLaren Group
- Tim Tolcher – Architect
- Andrew Windress – ID Planning
- Joe Raper – Senior Heritage Planner ID Planning

The Plans Panel were informed of the following:

- The proposals seek to create a multi-level development of residential apartments, of 9 to 26 storeys including ground floor, set within a landscaped area, with undercroft car parking and a smaller area of surface parking.
- The scheme proposed would be for 359 apartments comprising of the following:
 - 5% - 1 bedroomed 1 person apartments
 - 50% - 1 bedroomed 2 person apartments
 - 40% - 2 bedroomed apartments
 - 5% - 3 bedroomed apartments
- The proposal would also include internal communal amenity spaces and external landscaped communal spaces. Part of the external area would be a raised podium to the centre of the site, alongside roof terraced areas and ground floor surface landscaping.

- The scheme proposes 55 car parking spaces in an undercroft parking area and 300 secure cycle parking spaces.
- One of the key benefits of the site would be to link from Bath Road through Midland Mills into Water Lane subject to agreement with the adjacent landowner.
- Appearance would draw on the mill buildings with matched brickwork with strong expressed frames to facades, arranged vertically. Large glazed windows in a mill/warehouse style, would be recessed within a strong grid with deep reveals. It was proposed to have balconies on some of the 2 and 3 bedroomed units.
- It was noted that the developers would have a conversation with the developers of Midland Mills to seek consent to remove the wall in front of Midland Mills to open up the site.

Member's discussions included:

- Scope for play areas for young families.
- A wish to see the development fully compliant with housing mix.
- More private balconies including internal balconies.
- Parking provision for scope to include visitor parking.
- Difference between 1 bedroomed 1 person apartments and 1 bedroomed 2 person apartments. It was noted that there was a difference in square meterage and this formed part of the nationally prescribed space standards. Members did raise concerns that there would be no way to prevent 2 people living in inadequate space of a 1 bedroomed 1 person apartment. The Legal Adviser clarified that our Core Strategy Space Standards took precedence over national space standards.
- Members were of the view that the slides shown were below the usual standard and perhaps had not provided the most inspiring development. It was the view that the entrance was uninspiring and needed to show quality landscaping. It was acknowledged that work was still ongoing to develop the landscaping and there was still a conversation to be had with the developers of Midland Mills to join the spaces.
- Members questioned the basic research into the proposed housing mix and if this had differentiated between a family living in the 3 bedroomed units as opposed to 3 people sharing the 3 bedroomed units. The developers were agreeable to sharing information on the research undertaken. It was noted that the affordable units would be located within the development.

Members were asked to provide comments to the following questions as set out in the submitted report:

8.2 – Do Members have any comments on the proposed housing mix?

- Members wanted the development to be policy compliant.
- Would welcome information on the research undertaken.
- Clarification was required in relation to 1 bedroomed 1 person apartments and 1 bedroomed 2 person apartments.
- Clarification on demand for 3 bedroomed units in the area.

8.3 – Do Members support the emerging design of the development?

- Developers were requested to note the comments provided by Members during their discussions on landscaping.
- Members were of the view that they were unable to comment on the detailed design of the buildings as they had not seen detailed graphics to be able to comment on. However, there was support for the emerging mass and scale across the site with the lower buildings towards the Water Lane frontage and the taller element towards Bath Road.
- Members wished to see provision of more balconies.

8.4 – Do Members support the approach to car parking provision in this location?

- Members were concerned that parking in this location was already problematic. Members were of the view that parking should be made available for taxi's, visitors and deliveries.

In summing up the Area Planning Manager said that all comments had been noted with the following highlighted:

- Housing Mix – Need to maximise in line with adopted policy, provide clarification in relation to the space standards and information on research for housing demand in the area.
- The massing and scale generally seem to be agreeable.
- The approach to less parking for residents was noted but Members wanted provision of sufficient space for visitors and deliveries.
- Provision of more balconies.
- Provision of quality green space.

80 Date and Time of Next Meeting

RESOLVED – To note that the next meeting of City Plans Panel was scheduled for Thursday 28th October 2021, at 1:30pm in the Civic Hall, Leeds.

The meeting concluded at 15:30