

## **Plans Panel (City Centre)**

**Thursday, 3rd December, 2009**

**PRESENT:** Councillor M Hamilton in the Chair

Councillors D Blackburn, Mrs R Feldman,  
T Hanley, J McKenna, J Monaghan,  
E Nash and G Wilkinson

### **47 Chair's opening remarks**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked Members and Officers to introduce themselves

### **48 Declarations of Interest**

The following Members declared personal/prejudicial interests for the purpose of Section 81(3) of the Local Government Act 2000 and paragraphs 8 to 12 of the Members Code of Conduct

Applications 08/05307/FU and 08/05309/CA – 14 – 28 The Calls LS2 –  
Councillors Hanley and Monaghan declared personal interests as members of Leeds Civic Trust which had commented on the proposals (minute 52 refers)

Application 09/04615/RM – Archive Building Western Campus University of Leeds Moorland Road – Councillor Hamilton declared a personal and prejudicial interest through being employed by Leeds University who were the applicants (minute 53 refers)

### **49 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Latty. The Chair welcomed Councillor Wilkinson who was substituting for Councillor Latty

### **50 Minutes**

**RESOLVED** - That the minutes of the Plans Panel City Centre meeting held on 5<sup>th</sup> November 2009 be approved

### **51 Matters arising from the minutes**

Further to minute 37 of the Plans Panel meeting held on 5<sup>th</sup> November 2009, the Head of Planning Services informed Members that following a recruitment exercise, Daljit Singh had been appointed to the post of Area Planning Manager for Central Area Team, pending a restructure within Planning Services

Members congratulated Daljit on his temporary appointment

### **52 Applications 08/05307/FU and 08/05309/CA - Alterations and extension to form offices and A3/A4 bar restaurant development and erection of 5 storey office block with basement car parking and public landscaped area - 14 - 28**

## **The Calls and Conservation Area application for demolition of the Mission Hut and 28 The Calls LS2**

Further to minute 6 of the Plans Panel City Centre meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> June 2009 where Members considered a position statement for a mixed use development, car parking and public landscaped area at 14-28 The Calls and associated Conservation Area application for the demolition of the Mission Hut and 28 The Calls, the Panel considered the formal application

Plans, photographs and graphics were displayed at the meeting

Members were informed that the applicant had submitted a letter after the agenda had been despatched raising issues about the viability of the S106 contribution. As a result Officers would need to review a financial viability statement submitted by the applicant so Panel would be unable to determine the application at the meeting. However Members' views were sought on the revisions which had been made to the scheme since it was last presented in June

For the purposes of identification of the two buildings, these would be referred to by their new names of the Warehouse Hill building and the Atkinson building

The revisions to the scheme were outlined and comprised:

- alteration of the form and extent of the overhang on the Warehouse Hill building and removal of the columns which would lead to more open views of the River Aire from The Calls
- amendments to the entrance to the Warehouse Hill building to create an improved relationship and connection with The Calls
- introduction of a stone plinth to the Warehouse Hill building which would create a strong base to the building, provide vertical emphasis and visually link the building with the riverside walkway
- reorganisation of windows to provide a vertical emphasis to the Warehouse Hill building facing the river
- clearer definition of the roof form which would be expressed by a floating façade of copper
- improved relationship to the residential units at 32 The Calls and the creation of a wider public route
- improvements to the visual link from the 'contemplative space', so reducing the possible risk of anti-social behaviour
- increased openness of the public space through remodelling the space within the Atkinson building

Officers reported that following these revisions, Leeds Civic Trust now supported the scheme but had raised minor concerns regarding:

- the importance of the detailing of the junctions from the stone plinth to the brickwork above it
- the need for increased greenery within the scheme
- that no external plant should be sited on the roof of the buildings

Leeds Civic Trust had also requested that every effort should be made to link the site across to 32 The Calls, but accepted that this area was in a different ownership

Receipt of a letter of objection was reported which raised concerns as to how the application had been dealt with and the impact of the A3/A4 uses on nearby residents' amenity

Members were of the view that the current scheme was much improved on the previous one and commented on the following matters:

- the irregular aligned windows on the Warehouse Hill building and whether this detracted from the elegance of the building
- that the side elevation of the Warehouse Hill building was uninteresting and whether this could be enlivened
- the use of blue brick, particularly on the Atkinson Building with concerns this was too harsh in this location
- whether the blue brick would be in a plain or textured finish
- the importance of the detailed setting of the stone plinth in the context of the overall design
- concerns about the accessibility of the site for people with disabilities
- concerns that only 3 disabled car parking spaces were being provided
- the impact of the scheme on the residential units at 32 The Calls and the need for Environmental Health Officers' views to be obtained in respect of possible noise and odour issues associated with the proposed A3/A4 use
- concerns about flooding, particularly to the bar/restaurant uses
- that in the past, slopes had been introduced into the area and the hope that these remained to assist with disabled access
- that railings should be provided along the riverside and that these should be elegant in design
- that possible hours of use of the restaurant/bar should be restricted to 1.00am, with no outside use after 10.30pm
- that the cast iron 'Warehouse Hill' plate on the site should be retrieved and appropriately re-sited

Officers provided the following responses:

- that the window patterns could be considered further. The Civic Architect, Mr Thorp, stated that the blue brick of the Atkinson building was picked up in the projection on the Warehouse Hill building and if this material was amended then the relationship between the two buildings would require further consideration
- that a lift and ramp were provided for disabled access, although further clarification would be sought on whether the lift would provide access to the riverside level
- that the number of disabled parking spaces would be reviewed
- that Environmental Health Officers had been consulted on the proposals and recommended conditions requiring acoustic attenuation measures to the A3/4 use and restricted hours of use in the interest of residential amenity. Whilst noting Members' concerns on this matter, Officers stated that the UDP (Review) 2006 supported leisure uses in this area and for them to spill out beyond the buildings
- that the scheme had been designed to a 1:200 year flood level with the car park being designed to prevent water ingress and the retail units being located at a higher level
- that a design guide now existed for railings along the river and that the design of any railings would be in accordance with that document

**RESOLVED** - To note the comments now made and that the Chief Planning Officer be asked to submit a further report in due course for determination of the application which also provided details on the viability of the public transport contributions and addressed design issues of rhythm, proportion and materiality; the

outlook from 32 The Calls; comments from Licensing and Environmental Health Officers, confirmation that the level of disabled parking was in accordance with the UDP (Review) 2006; flood risk and the provision and design of railings along the riverside

**53 Application 09/04615/RM - Reserved Matters application for an archive building with associated landscaping - Western Campus University of Leeds Moorland Road LS2**

Having declared a personal and prejudicial interest, Councillor Hamilton vacated the chair and withdrew from the meeting

Councillor Monaghan was nominated and elected to chair this item

Councillor Monaghan in the Chair

Further to minute 21 of the Plans Panel City Centre meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> August 2009 where Panel agreed an outline application for the scale and position of a document archive store as part of a University development of three buildings around a collegiate-style green, Members considered a Reserved Matters application for an archive building which would be used by the University Library and by Marks and Spencer to house their archive collection which was currently sited in London

Plans, graphics, drawings and a sample panel of the proposed cladding were displayed at the meeting

Officers presented the report and informed Members that the building would align with the corner of the Charles Thackray building and be oriented to the campus green

The entrance to the building would be from the green and would feature raised planters and formal seating outside

At ground level there would be a reception and exhibition area with opportunities for reading rooms/ seminar rooms. An internal plant area together with kitchen and office facilities would also be located on this floor and there would be two stair cores; one with a lift

The next level would not be publicly accessible and would contain the Marks and Spencer strong room and archive materials. This level would also provide some library storage space for the University as would the top floor

The building was functional in design and comprised stainless steel pleated cladding which would be chemically coloured in a bronze colour. The cladding would be arranged along the building to enable the pleats to change direction and add visual interest. The highly reflective panels had been used on the Millennium Building in Cardiff and had proved to be highly weather resistant. The panels would be pre-formed and have 5mm joints which would give a seamless appearance

At ground level the proposed materials would be curtain wall glazing and brick cladding. Two wall features would extend from either end of the building which due to the land levels, would hide the plant from the sports centre at the rear and also help define the bank of trees from the formal landscaping to the front of the building

A delivery area to the east of the building would be accessed from the existing Clarendon Road and Moorland Road access and exits; three disabled parking spaces would be provided outside the entrance to the building

In terms of landscaping proposals, trees in raised planters would be situated at the front of the building and a double bank of trees was proposed around the college green area, the site of which would also be levelled out and include a diagonal footpath 3m – 6m in width

There was a requirement for roof-top plant and this had been carefully sited to ensure that views of the plant reduced from the main approaches and that only oblique views of this would be glimpsed from the northern side of the campus green

Members were informed that a speaker had registered to address the Panel and that two letters of objection had been received from local residents on the following grounds:

- the archive store would generate significant traffic to the area and no parking had been provided for visitors
- the proposed design of the building was 'ugly' and did not blend in with the conservation area character
- the building should not be lit at night
- the building would block out views of the former Grammar School buildings from Woodsley Road
- the building would result in a loss of existing greenspace and protected playing fields

Officers advised on the matters raised by the objectors as follows:

The principle of the loss of the protected greenspace, the scale and position of the archive store and the likely traffic and parking implications had been fully considered and agreed at the time of the outline planning application. It was for Members to consider the merits or otherwise of the proposed design. There were no current proposals to light the building at night time apart from security lighting to the footpaths and entrance areas

The Panel heard representations from an objector who attended the meeting, following which Members discussed the proposals and commented on the following matters:

- the comments made by the speaker as to the legality of determining the application in view of concerns raised regarding consideration of the objections received
- concerns about the species of trees to be planted and the need to avoid sycamores or field maples
- some dissatisfaction at the proposed cladding and the view that this could be improved upon particularly in this setting
- whether there was scope for the provision of a green roof
- the appropriateness of a pedestrian access across the middle of the site and whether this should be redirected

The Head of Planning Services stated that issues around the loss of the playing pitch had been dealt with previously through the outline application which had also established the principle of development. The application before Members related to design matters and could only be considered on that basis

In response to the concerns raised as to the legality of determining the application at this time, the Head of Planning Services informed Members that he was content that due process had been followed in this case and that a decision on the application could be made. It was not uncommon, due to the required timescales for the publication of the agenda, for reports to be written ahead of objections being received. In this case the issues raised had been considered and

put to Members to enable them to have regard to all the information available prior to determining the application

In response to a question from the Panel, the Legal Services representative concurred with the advice already given by the Head of Planning Services

Officers provided the following information in response to the issues raised by Members

- that a BREEAM 'excellent' rating was being sought for the development which in itself was a costly exercise. Whilst noting the comments about the provision of a green roof, Officers were of the view that such a request could not be justified
- regarding the footpath across the site, the majority of Members considered that if this was to be removed, a desire line would remain to enable the whole site to be accessed by the shortest walking route. In view of this the suggestion to relocate the diagonal footpath was not supported

**RESOLVED** - To approve the application in principle and to defer and delegate final approval to the Chief Planning Officer subject to resolving the detailed consultation responses and detailed matters raised in section 10 – 'Appraisal' of the submitted report

**54 Date and time of next meeting**

Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> January 2010 at 1.30pm in the Civic Hall, Leeds