



Report of the Chief Planning Officer

CITY PLANS PANEL

Date: 21st NOVEMBER 2013

PROPOSAL FOR TWO NEW STUDENT ACCOMMODATION BUILDINGS, RETAIL UNIT AND PUBLIC SPACE, CITY CAMPUS, CALVERLEY STREET, LEEDS (13/04584/FU)

APPLICANT

Downing Property Services

DATE VALID

30th September 2013

TARGET DATE

30th December 2013

Electoral Wards Affected:

City and Hunslet

Yes

Specific Implications For:

Equality and Diversity

Community Cohesion

Narrowing the Gap

RECOMMENDATION : DEFER and DELEGATE to the Chief Planning Officer for approval subject to the satisfactory resolution of the issues identified in the report and subject to the specified conditions (and any others which he might consider appropriate) and also the completion of a Section 106 agreement to include the following obligations; restriction to student occupation; public transport contribution (£24,380); travel plan and monitoring fee (£500); accessibility to public areas; employment and training initiatives; and Section 106 management fee (£750). In the circumstances where the Section 106 has not been completed within 3 months of the resolution to grant planning permission the final determination of the application shall be delegated to the Chief Planning Officer.

Summary Conditions

- 1 3 Year Time Limit
- 2 Development to be in accordance with approved plans.
- 3 Notification of Commencement.
- 4 Notification of unexpected significant land contamination and remedial work if found necessary.

- 5 Soil brought to site to be suitable for use.
- 6 Tree protection before commencement.
- 7 Schedule of tree works to retained trees.
- 8 Hard and soft landscape details.
- 9 Implementation of hard and soft landscaping.
- 10 Landscape management and maintenance.
- 11 Replacement of soft landscaping if it is removed, destroyed or dies.
- 12 Details of contractor's storage and parking.
- 13 Details of methods to control dirt, dust and noise during construction.
- 14 Construction hours.
- 15 1:20 drawings and sections.
- 16 Details and sample panel of all external facing and surfacing materials.
- 17 Implementation and retention of wind mitigation measures.
- 18 Short and long stay cycle facilities to be provided before occupation.
- 19 Details of method, storage and disposal of litter and refuse.
- 20 BREEAM Excellent to be achieved and post construction review of sustainability measures.
- 21 Drainage to be provided before occupation.
- 22 Sound insulation scheme to protect residents from noise to a good standard at night.
- 23 Post completion sound test.
- 24 Provision of pedestrian route between Campus Square and Portland Way before occupation.
- 25 Provision and retention of an active frontage to the commercial unit.
- 26 Consent required for signage to commercial unit.
- 27 Management of fumes/odours if the commercial unit is A3/A5.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This presentation is intended to inform Members of the current planning application for the construction of two new student accommodation buildings on vacant land at Leeds Metropolitan University's City Campus. The buildings would contain a total of 465 studios and a small retail unit. The buildings would sit in new hard and soft landscaped spaces arranged perpendicular to Calverley Street.
- 1.2 Downing acquired the north and western half of the Leeds Metropolitan University campus in 2010. The area comprised large, redundant university buildings, underused open space, cleared land and had poor permeability. The first phase of regeneration was completed in Summer 2012 and the second phase of student accommodation, comprising a new tower adjacent to the Inner Ring Road, commenced earlier this year and is due to be ready for occupation in September 2014. The current proposal represents the third and final phase of the developer's masterplan. It is intended to commence construction early in 2014 to enable completion in time for student occupation in 2015. The University of Leeds has leased the first and second phases of the development and has agreed draft heads of terms to lease the third phase from the developer.
- 1.3 A pre-application presentation of the scheme was presented to City Plans Panel on 29th August 2013. The minutes of that meeting are attached as Appendix 1. On 4th September 2013, following survey work and recommendations made by the Student Housing Working Group, Executive Board approved an amendment to the draft Core Strategy Policy H6B intended to manage the delivery of new student housing.

- 1.4 This report is brought to City Plans Panel as the development involves major investment and development of a significant, previously developed site within the Education Quarter.

2.0 SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

- 2.1 Leeds Metropolitan University (LMU) city campus is bounded by Calverley Street, Willow Terrace Road, Portland Way, Woodhouse Lane and the Inner Ring Road to the north of the city centre. It is characterised by denser built forms towards the eastern side and a more open setting containing protected trees on the northern and western edges. The southern portion of the site was cleared of redundant LMU buildings during 2007/8. The earliest buildings on the campus were constructed in the late 1960's to the designs of Yorke, Rosenberg and Mardall Architects. Two of these buildings were refurbished as part of the first phase of the development.
- 2.2 The site encompasses land on the western side of the campus between Calverley Street and the University's Portland and Calverley Buildings. The land comprises a grassed area, hardsurfaced parking space and steps, and previously developed land currently being used as a site compound. The site contains several trees, primarily adjacent to Calverley Street. Levels fall by 6 metres from the Calverley Building down to Calverley Street. Levels also fall down Calverley Street towards the south.
- 2.3 The surrounding area is mainly characterised by institutional and civic uses. Leeds General Infirmary is situated across Calverley Street to the west and the Civic Hall and the LMU Rosebowl building are located beyond Portland Way to the south. The University of Leeds campus is located directly to the north of the Inner Ring Road. A seven storey hotel was approved at the junction of Portland Way and Calverley Street in June 2012 but has yet to be commenced.
- 2.4 The campus is located between the University Conservation Area, the City Centre Conservation Area and Queen Square Conservation Area. The Civic Hall is grade II* listed. Trees around the site are protected by Tree Preservation Order (No.22) 2007.

3.0 PROPOSALS

- 3.1 The current proposals seek to continue the development of the architect's 2010 masterplan for the site responding to the surrounding urban grain whilst delivering improved access, permeability and reinforcing key spaces.
- 3.2 The development involves two buildings accommodating 465 students in a combination of studios (77) and cluster bedrooms (388). Both forms of accommodation would be accessed from a corridor running along the spine of the buildings. Each of the studios would have kitchen/dining space and en-suite shower or bathroom facilities. Standard bedrooms would be grouped in clusters of no more than 6 bedrooms served by a shared kitchen and living area. 13 per cent (62) of the bedrooms will be larger adaptable rooms to meet current accessibility requirements.
- 3.3 The two new buildings would be partly linked at lower ground floor level albeit the link containing plant rooms would be located discreetly beneath the rising ground levels. The lowest level of the northern building would contain a double height retail

unit (144sqm) which could potentially be a shop (A1), café (A3) or hot-food take-away (A5). There would also be support space for the student accommodation above, including a bike store. The front, slightly cantilevered, element of the building would have 5 storeys of student rooms above the retail unit. The rear of the building would have 15 storeys of accommodation above the upper ground floor entrance level which primarily comprises a lobby area, management suite and a common room (191sqm).

- 3.4 The proposed southern building contains a large common room (307sqm) and study area at lower ground floor level. In common with the northern building, the front element of this building would contain 5 storeys of student rooms above the common room. The upper ground floor would also be used as the entrance level including lobby and social areas, in addition to student bedrooms. The rear of the southern building would have 11 storeys of accommodation above the entrance floor.
- 3.5 The buildings would have a linear footprint arranged perpendicular to the University's Portland and Calverley buildings and parallel to the proposed hotel building. The gable ends of the buildings would be 7.5 metres from the Portland and Calverley buildings beyond a new landscaped footway. The footway, which is intended to provide the north-south pedestrian route through the campus, will include a slope down towards Portland Way so as to provide level access. The new buildings would be 18.8m apart. The northern building would be 19m from the existing Block B / Tescos and the southern building would be 28m from the proposed hotel creating an ordered pattern of development along Calverley Street.
- 3.6 At lower ground floor level a 7m floor to floor height establishes a clear podium on both buildings with light, glazed elevations fronting onto Calverley Street. The double height deep structural grids are expressed on each flank of the buildings. The current proposal involves a white, pre-cast concrete frame with light grey, exposed aggregate pre-cast concrete infill panels adjacent to the windows. Each room is provided with at least one full height glazed element with the resultant asymmetric window positioning creating a strong rhythm to the facades. The gable ends utilise large pre-cast concrete panels with occasional vertical grooves intended to add a subtle layer of texture to the building.
- 3.7 The new space between the two new buildings would be primarily hardsurfaced including a striking cascade of steps leading up towards the Calverley Building in a similar location to those existing but double their width. The new public space would be formed in high quality concrete pavements with strong geometric forms and street furniture complimenting the building design. The front of the buildings would be set back 6 to 14 metres from Calverley Street. The new level frontage would provide access into the new retail unit and the southern building's common and study areas as an extension to the existing pedestrian footpath. Areas of soft landscaping would be created to the front of buildings to enable retention of as many of the existing roadside trees as possible. A total of 11 trees would be removed as part of the development whereas 25 new trees are currently proposed
- 3.8 Space to the north of the northern building and to the south of the southern building would be laid out as greenspace although changing levels limit its usability. Undulating mounded lawns are proposed in response to the changing levels. New tree and ornamental planting would be arranged in a geometric fashion relating to the wider side layout and architectural treatment. The landscaped mounds would be bordered by feature edges creating distinctive ribbons running down the undulating landscape. Robust materials would be used with copings designed to

deter damage. The spaces, landscape and routes would be enhanced by lighting based on the existing in addition to feature lighting.

- 3.9 Gas fired combined heat and power plant would provide low carbon electricity generation as the preferred Low or Zero Carbon technology. Air source heat pumps are also proposed to generate a small quantity of heating and cooling. High frequency compact fluorescent lighting will be provided to minimise energy consumption. The development will have a Low Water usage strategy. A Site Waste Management Plan will also be adopted to reduce waste through the construction process as well as designing systems to reduce waste once the development is in use. It is likely that the development will achieve a “Very Good” BREEAM rating.
- 3.10 A Travel Plan submitted in support of the application sets out measures to encourage sustainable travel. A total of 58 long stay cycle spaces will be provided within the building, in addition to 13 short stay Sheffield stands. The development would not provide any additional parking spaces. The existing 25 parking spaces accessed from Woodhouse Lane would be available for use at the start and end of terms. One of the parking spaces is dedicated for use by the car club. Waste collection and deliveries would take place from the existing service lay-by on Calverley Street provided as part of the earlier phase of development.

4.0 PLANNING HISTORY AND CONSULTATION

- 4.1 Since construction in the late 1960’s the campus remained largely unchanged until the late 1990’s when the Leslie Silver building was constructed adjacent to Woodhouse Lane. Following demolition of buildings to the north of the junction of Portland Way and Calverley Street pre-application proposals for the wider site were considered by Plans Panel in March 2008. The site was acquired by Downing in 2010.
- 4.2 Plans Panel considered the application for the first phase of Downing’s proposed development across the northern half of the campus site in February 2011. At that time an illustrative masterplan was presented identifying principles of building layout; future pedestrian connections and showing how the development could be integrated with the landscape. The second phase, a 21 storey tower on the northern edge, was approved in April 2012 and is currently under construction. A hotel was approved on the southern fringe of the site at the junction of Portland Way and Calverley Street in June 2012 but has yet to be commenced.
- 4.3 Detailed pre-application discussions regarding the current scheme commenced in June 2013. Plans Panel received a pre-application presentation of the proposals on 29th August 2013.

5.0 PUBLIC/LOCAL RESPONSE

- 5.1 Site notices advertising the application were displayed around the site on 11th October 2013 and the application was advertised in the YEP on 4th October 2013. Letters were also sent to the University of Leeds, Leeds Metropolitan University (LMU) and Unipol notifying those organisations of the application.

5.2 Leeds Civic Trust (LCT) supports the scheme. LCT welcomes the provision of student accommodation in this location and states that it will help to continue the gradual restoration of accommodation for families in the Headingley area. LCT also comments that:

- the scheme will help to enliven Calverley Street, with active frontages and green spaces;
- the modelling and proportions will sit well as a backdrop to the Civic Hall in views from Millennium Square;
- careful consideration will need to be given to design and materials to ensure they weather acceptably.

5.3 LMU has provided a response to the application. They consider that the proposed buildings are far too close to the Portland and Calverley Building. They also raise questions about the following issues:

- access and parking proposals upon completion;
- measures to control noise and dust generation during the construction process;
- how pedestrian and emergency access will be maintained during and after the construction process and what Health and Safety precautions will be established;
- what precautions will be put in place to protect neighbouring buildings from being undermined;
- whether the impact of wind has been considered;
- whether the space will become public open space.

5.4 The University of Leeds has commented that they have a lease on phase I and phase II of the site and are pleased with both the quality of accommodation and its management of phase I which is now in its second year of operation. They have been in discussion with the developer regarding the third phase of development on the basis that the rooms will be larger than standard rooms and be a higher quality. The University state that draft heads of terms have been agreed with the developer which both parties would seek to formalise in the event that planning permission is granted.

6.0 CONSULTATIONS RESPONSES

Statutory:

Transport Development Services:

A Transport Assessment has been submitted in support of the proposals. The site is in a sustainable location. The limited and managed on-site parking will ensure that traffic generated by the development will remain low. No objections to the proposals subject to conditions relating to construction, provision of cycling facilities, and closing of redundant accesses.

English Heritage

The stepped articulation of the two blocks should mean that the proposed buildings will not harm the setting of the Civic Hall whilst the highest sections should not intrude substantially, if at all, in views from Millennium Square. The new buildings should form a successful terminus of views north along Calverley Street but will not be overly dominant upon their historic neighbours.

Non-statutory

Flood Risk Management:

Infiltration drainage would be unsuitable. The proposed on-site attenuation with restricted discharge to the public sewer is acceptable in principle. No objection subject to a standard drainage condition regarding surface water drainage works.

NGT Project Team:

Under the terms of the Public Transport Improvements and Developer Contributions SPD a contribution of £24,380 should be sought towards the cost of providing the strategic enhancements which are needed to accommodate additional trips on the network.

Transport Development Services (Travelwise):

The submitted travel plan needs to be updated to refer to the operation of phase I of the development and the use of the existing car park. A Travel Plan review fee of £500 is required.

Contaminated Land Team:

The site investigation proposals are satisfactory. No objections are raised subject to standard conditions being applied.

Entertainment Licensing:

No issues regarding the residential element. Further details of the retail use will be required if the end use is A3 or A5.

Police Architectural Liaison Officer:

It is recommended that bollards are installed to protect the entrance from vehicle attack. The new square should be lit by good quality lighting. The implementation of Secured By Design guidelines and use of CCTV to all external elevations is welcomed. Questions are raised regarding the management of access control into the buildings.

7.0 PLANNING POLICY

- 7.1 The introduction of the NPPF has not changed the legal requirement that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The policy guidance in Annex 1 to the NPPF is that due weight should be given to relevant policies in existing plans according to their degree of consistency with the NPPF. The closer the policies in the plan to the policies in the Framework, the greater the weight that may be given.

7.2 Unitary Development Plan Review

- 7.2.1 The area forms part of the designated Education Quarter in the adopted Unitary Development Plan Review (UDPR). The main objective of the designation is to facilitate the University's main functional requirements on site, enhance its character and reinforce its distinct sense of place, improve linkages with the rest of the city centre, encourage the provision of extra student housing, and resolve vehicular access and circulation. Proposals for other uses in the Quarter will be encouraged which service the Quarter; add variety in land use and contribute to the vitality of the city centre; and support the attractiveness of the area for the principal use (CC27).
- 7.2.2 Policy H15A promotes student housing in areas beyond the Area of Housing Mix such as this. Paragraph 7.5.35 states that "significant potential exists for further student housing in the City Centre and in locations elsewhere. To be successful, such provision will need to be well served by public transport connections to the Universities, have the potential to appeal to students and be capable of being assimilated into the existing neighbourhood without nuisance. The City Council will encourage and support pioneer developments in such locations to help establish a critical mass of student presence and, ultimately, generate alternative popular locations for students to live, other than the wider Headingley area".
- 7.2.3 The existing parking area and footway into the site is allocated as public space. The Calverley Street edge identifies an aspiration for an enhanced pedestrian route. Other relevant UDPR policies include GP5 (detailed planning considerations to be resolved and should seek to avoid loss of amenity); GP11 (development must meet sustainable development principles); N12 (priorities for urban design); N13 (All new buildings should be designed to a high quality and have regard to the surroundings); Policy N19 states that new buildings within or adjacent to conservation areas should preserve or enhance the character of the area; N23 (space around new development should provide a visually attractive setting and existing features which make a positive contribution should be retained); T2 (development should not create or materially add to problems of safety or efficiency on the highway network); and A4 (design of safe and secure environments, including access arrangements, public space, servicing and maintenance, materials and lighting). In the city centre character will be maintained by encouraging good design of buildings and spaces and upgrading the environment (CC3); and development in conservation areas or its immediate setting must preserve or enhance the character of the area (CC5). Policy CC21 states that ancillary shopping development will be acceptable outside the Prime Shopping Quarter provided it contributes to overall planning objectives for the quarter.

7.3 Natural Resources and Waste Local Plan 2013 (NRWLP)

- 7.3.1 The Natural Resources and Waste Local Plan was adopted by Leeds City Council on 16th January 2013. The NRWLP is part of the Local Development Framework.
- 7.3.2 One of the strategic objectives of the NRWLP is the efficient use of previously developed land. General Policy 1 is that when considering development proposals the Council will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework.

7.3.3 Policy Energy 3 states that proposals for low carbon energy recovery methods, including Combined Heat and Power applications, and supporting infrastructure will be supported in principle.

7.3.4 Policy Land 1 states that trees should be conserved wherever possible and new planting should be introduced to create high quality environments for development. Where removal of existing trees is agreed in order to facilitate development 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 on-site planting cannot be achieved off-site planting will be sought or an agreed financial contribution will be required for tree planting elsewhere.

7.4 National Planning Policy Framework

7.4.1 Planning should proactively drive and support sustainable economic development; and seek to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings. Planning should also encourage the use of renewable resources (para. 17). Local Planning Authorities (LPA's) should recognise town centres as the heart of their communities and support their vitality and viability; and recognise that residential development can play an important role in ensuring the vitality of centres (para. 23). Local Planning Authorities should look for opportunities for new development within the setting of heritage assets to enhance or better reveal their significance (para. 137).

7.5 Draft Core Strategy (DCS)

7.5.1 The draft Core Strategy sets out strategic level policies and vision to guide the delivery of development investment decisions and the overall future of the district. On 26th April 2013 the Council submitted the Publication Draft Core Strategy to the Secretary of State. The Inspector examined the Strategy during October 2013. The weight to be attached is limited where representations have been made.

7.5.2 DCS Policy H6B considers proposals for purpose built student accommodation. Developments should extend the supply to take pressure off the use of private housing; avoid excessive concentrations of student accommodation; and avoid locations which are not easily accessible to the Universities by foot or public transport.

7.5.3 Following approval from Executive Board the Council put forward late changes to Policy H6B in response to new evidence concerning future demand / supply of student accommodation and concern about an increasing surplus of bedspaces forecast in Leeds. The changes were subject to 3 weeks public consultation prior to being considered as late changes at the Core Strategy examination in October. The changes would alter Policy H6B as follows:

B) Development proposals for purpose built student accommodation will be controlled:

~~i) To help extend the supply of student accommodation taking pressure off the need for private housing to be used,~~ accept new provision where a provider demonstrates that there is a need for additional student accommodation or that it has a formal accommodation agreement with a university/higher education institution for the supply of bed-spaces

- ii) To avoid the loss of existing housing suitable for family occupation,
- iii) To avoid excessive concentrations of student accommodation (in a single development or in combination with existing accommodation) which would undermine the balance and wellbeing of communities,
- iv) To avoid locations which are not easily accessible to the Universities by foot or public transport or which would generate excessive footfall through residential areas which may lead to detrimental impacts on residential amenity.
- v) To ensure new accommodation is of an appropriate quality and size in terms of environmental health standards
- vi) To ensure new accommodation can be physically adapted for occupation by average sized households

7.5.4 DCS Policy P10 requires new development to be based on a thorough contextual analysis to provide good design appropriate to its scale and function, delivering high quality innovative design and enhancing existing landscapes and spaces. P12 states that landscapes will be conserved and enhanced. Policy G6 states that open space in the city centre will be protected unless (ii) the space is replaced by an area of at least equal size and quality or (iii) redevelopment proposals demonstrate a clear relationship to improvements to existing greenspace quality in the same locality. Policy CC1e(i) supports small scale retail/catering in such a location. Policy CC3 states that development in appropriate locations is required to help and improve routes connecting the City Centre with adjoining neighbourhoods, and improve connections within the City Centre. Policies EN1 and EN2 identify sustainable development criteria including achieving a BREEAM standard of Excellent from 2013 onwards. DCS Policies T1 and T2 identify transport management and accessibility requirements for new development. Specific accessibility standards are included in DCS Appendix 2.

7.6 Supplementary guidance

7.6.1 Public Transport Improvements and Developer Contributions SPD identifies where development will need to make a contribution towards public transport improvements or enhancements.

7.6.2 Building for Tomorrow Today – Sustainable Design and Construction SPD identifies sustainable development requirements.

7.6.3 Travel Plans SPD (September 2012) identifies the need for sustainable approaches to travel.

7.6.4 SPG 14 Leeds City Centre Urban Design Strategy (September 2000). The guide refers to the need to retain and enhance space in the area; encourages appropriate ancillary uses at all times of the day and to provide active uses in holiday periods; to develop a mixture of land uses; to realise opportunities for increased soft landscape; to promote active frontages; to promote sustainable development; to enhance pedestrian movement; and to enhance the existing variety of buildings.

7.7 Other material considerations

7.7.1 Best Council Plan

The Plan identifies 6 objectives in order to achieve the best council outcomes identified between 2013-2017. Two of these have relevance for the development:

(2) Dealing effectively with the city's waste; and (5) Promoting sustainable and inclusive economic growth.

7.7.2 Vision for Leeds 2011-2030

One of the aims is that by 2030 Leeds' economy will be prosperous and sustainable. This includes having a skilled workforce to meet the needs of the local economy. Leeds will be the best city to live in including the provision of high quality buildings, places and green spaces.

7.7.3 City Priority Plan 2011-2015

The Plan states that Leeds will be the best city for business. One of the priorities to achieve this is supporting the sustainable growth of the Leeds' economy. To help make Leeds the best city, growth will be enabled whilst protecting the city's distinctive green character.

8.0 MAIN ISSUES

1. Principle of development
2. Layout, scale and design
3. Wind
4. Sustainability
5. Highways and access
6. Landscape
7. Other issues
8. Section 106

9.0 APPRAISAL OF MAIN ISSUES

Members are asked to comment on the scheme and to consider the following matters:

9.1 Principle of the development

9.1.1 The site is situated within the city centre immediately adjacent to two universities and would involve efficient redevelopment of previously developed university land. The use for student accommodation would be in accordance with the objectives identified for the Education Quarter in the UDPR (policies CC27 and H15A).

9.1.2 More recent policy on purpose built student accommodation is being advanced through Policy H6B of the Core Strategy. In September, following on from the recommendations of the Student Housing Working Group, the Council brought forward changes to Policy H6B in response to evidence concerning the future demand / supply of student accommodation and concern about the potential surplus of bedspaces in the city. The policy (see para 7.5.3 above) was approved for Development Control purposes in September and as such is the Council's policy on student housing. However, the policy was vigorously contested at the Core Strategy Examination and, at this stage in the Core Strategy preparation, can only be given very little weight.

- 9.1.3 The applicant has provided a Student Accommodation Demand Analysis Report (Jones Lang Lasalle - JLL) as part of the supporting documentation for the application. It identifies that there are 53,405 full time students in higher education in the city. 12,307 (23%) of these are accommodated in university managed accommodation. 36,056 (67.5%) students live at home or in Houses in Multiple Occupation. There are an additional 5,042 (9.4%) bedspaces in purpose built accommodation managed by the private sector. A comparison with other UK cities with large student populations shows that Leeds occupies a median position in terms of the level of purpose built student accommodation. There is also planning permission in place for an additional 2,384 bedspaces. If all of these schemes were built the purpose built private sector would account for 13.9% of the stock, assuming other factors such as student numbers, remained constant. In these circumstances Leeds would still remain in a generally median position in the UK.
- 9.1.4 The JLL report concurs with the findings of Working Group that there was a significant reduction in the number of applications to study in Higher Education during 2012. The University of Leeds had 540 unfilled spaces, Leeds Metropolitan University 123 unfilled spaces whilst Leeds Trinity University filled all of its spaces.
- 9.1.5 Whilst there was an overall reduction in students during 2012 applications from international students increased. In the experience of JLL the availability of high quality accommodation is an important factor for international students in determining where they will seek to study such that the provision of purpose built accommodation is essential to the success of international student recruitment for universities.
- 9.1.6 The 2013 Renew report comments that “with the number of applications increasing for 2013/14, this would appear to suggest an increase in demand from new students for accommodation in 2013/14 and a potential continuing increase over future years”. This is backed up by reports from UCAS and Unipol. In July 2013 UCAS reported that demand for higher education is at or near record levels for each country of the UK and historical trends had been resumed. At the end of September 2013 UCAS stated that there had been a 9% increase in UK university’s acceptances compared to the previous year. Recent information suggests that student numbers at LMU increased by 20% this year relative to 2012/13. The increase in numbers in 2013 is also reflected in press releases from Unipol. In October 2013 Unipol reported that Leeds was following the national pattern in 2013/14, with the universities accepting around 1,200 additional students from the 2012/13 low point. Unipol also reported that the University of Leeds was doing particularly well in recruiting postgraduate international students. According to Unipol the larger, purpose built student accommodation were full from late August 2013 leading to students returning to the “off-street” market.
- 9.1.7 The JLL report also refers to the Renew report finding that there is a “clear preference from students for housing options closer to the universities and the city centre, and accordingly this may translate into increasing demand from returning students for purpose built accommodation”. At the same time the JLL report notes that the university managed accommodation will continue to age and deteriorate such that the private sector will have an important role to play in terms of delivering and maintaining the quality of purpose built housing stock in the city. Consequently, JLL consider that it is important that a pipeline of potential schemes is maintained so

as to assist in any future requirements for accommodation from the universities. JLL also comment that the proposed development would assist in rebalancing the over-reliance of students on the HMO market in areas such as Headingley.

- 9.1.8 Whereas Policy H6B can only be given limited weight the JLL report shows that the proposal accords well with the additional criteria. The JLL report concludes that Leeds still has a need for higher quality student accommodation well located to university teaching facilities. In addition, the University of Leeds has confirmed that they are in a process of agreeing terms for the proposed accommodation, to add to the first two phases of the development which it has already leased.
- 9.1.9 The proposed student accommodation is ideally located both with regard to the universities and also facilities within the city centre. Consequently, it would not have any direct impact upon either the balance of residential communities or their amenities. The proposed accommodation is of an appropriate size and quality. Further, the applicant has demonstrated a need for the development and draft terms have been agreed with the University of Leeds. Consequently, the proposals accord with the overall aims of the Development Plan and national planning guidance. The principle of development is therefore acceptable.
- 9.2 Layout, scale and design
- 9.2.1 The position of the buildings continues the orthogonal order set up by the original development under the original 1960's masterplan. The Leslie Silver Building and the university Union building have subsequently been constructed on the east side of the campus creating extensive floorplates on the eastern edge. Buildings, albeit much lower in height, previously abutted the Calverley and Portland Buildings at right angles until their demolition in 2007/08. Since demolition and the sale of the land the occupiers of the Calverley and Portland Buildings have enjoyed an open outlook towards the southwest.
- 9.2.2 Leeds Metropolitan University (LMU) has commented that the proposed buildings are far too close to existing buildings. In disposing of the land LMU expected that some form of development would take place at some point in the future. In general terms the proposed buildings are similar in height to original buildings retained on the campus. The identified layout reflects the ordered arrangement originally advocated when the 2010 masterplan for the site was developed, itself a logical response to the 1960's masterplan. The proposed buildings will have an impact upon the outlook and daylighting within the Calverley and Portland Buildings although no overlooking will arise given the blank gable ends proposed. It considered that the juxtaposition is acceptable in this situation by virtue of the city centre context and arrangement of buildings on the campus; the accordance with the masterplan; the extensive spaces retained between the proposed buildings enabling light and visibility between them; and due to the complementary uses involved.
- 9.2.3 The development involves two new buildings which step up in height from Calverley Street towards the Calverley and Portland Buildings. At the same time the buildings would step down in scale along Calverley Street to the scale of the approved hotel to the south. The front section of the two buildings are cantilevered over double height glazed areas which respond to the height of the existing Tesco retail block to the north. A retail unit in the northern building and a common room in the southern building would help to activate the Calverley Street frontage.

- 9.2.4 As with the existing buildings it is currently intended to utilise concrete and glass as the primary external building materials to deliver simple but elegant structures that respond positively to their context. An expressed grid draws inspiration from neighbouring buildings. The white concrete frame and gable ends bring together the architectural language of the site to produce unashamedly modernist buildings. At the same time the materiality, form, scale and rhythm of the buildings create a calm and appropriate backdrop to views of the Civic Hall from the south.
- 9.2.5 The proposed development would have an impact when viewed from within the Portland and Calverley Buildings. However, the proposed relationship is acceptable and the layout represents an appropriate respond to the site. Similarly, the massing, design and use combine to enhance the appearance of Calverley Street whilst protecting the setting of nearby listed buildings and conservation areas. Consequently, the proposal accords with policies GP5, N12, N13 and N19 of the UDPR and DCS policy P10.
- 9.3 Wind
- 9.3.1 People require safe and comfortable access to buildings around the development. Additionally, recreational and amenity areas where people can walk, stand or sit, need to be sheltered from high wind speeds. The application is supported by a quantitative assessment of the impact of the proposed development upon local wind patterns. The emphasis of the analysis is on the comfort and safety of pedestrians using public areas, including an assessment of gust effects for the prevailing wind direction. Although the buildings are set back from Calverley Street the report also considers the impact on adjacent road traffic.
- 9.3.2 The submitted report identifies that the construction process will cause temporary localised wind acceleration around the base of the buildings. Temporary wind mitigation measures, such as site hoardings, are advised during this period. The completed development would have a range of effects on pedestrian wind speeds and comfort conditions ranging from major beneficial to moderate adverse, although the general impact is identified as minor beneficial to a negligible effect.
- 9.3.3 Without mitigation wind speeds in the area of public realm between the new buildings are predicted to be unacceptable for sitting and standing. Canopies above the building entrances and landscaping provides adequate mitigation in these areas. Wind speeds in other public realm areas are acceptable, and in some cases improve the existing baseline condition. The impact of the development on wind speeds on the two roads close to the site, Calverley Street and Portland Way, is moderate/major beneficial due to the buildings providing significant shelter from prevailing winds.
- 9.3.4 Whilst the proposed window recesses in the buildings will help reduce the downwash effect the report identifies the use of soft and hard landscaping to further reduce the impact of wind. The report concludes that by implementing these measures the wind microclimate in all areas will be appropriate for their proposed use. LMU has questioned whether the changes in wind profile will affect use of their buildings through additional noise from wind.
- 9.3.5 The Council has sought independent analysis and verification of the submitted report. At the time of drafting this report a response had not been received. In the

event that the report is agreed, or if additional modifications are subsequently identified as being necessary by the Council's expert to make the scheme acceptable, the requirements would be subject of a planning condition.

9.4 Sustainability

9.4.1 The site is located in a highly sustainable city centre location and the development would have a sustainable approach to travel. The buildings' position minimises shading of the new public space whilst all bedrooms and dining spaces will be naturally ventilated. A Low and Zero Carbon Technology report submitted in support of the application considers the effectiveness and economics of a range of technologies. It concludes that a gas-fired combined heat and power plant is most suitable to provide the majority of low carbon electrical generation for the development. Energy consumption and water use will be limited, and heat loss would be reduced through the improvement of insulation throughout the building.

9.4.2 Initial analysis shows that at least 10 per cent of energy will be derived from renewable sources and CO2 emissions will be reduced by 21 per cent. The scheme currently achieves a BREEAM score of Very Good whereas current local policy seeks an Excellent standard where feasible. The developer states that whereas they strive for BREEAM Excellent they have never been able to deliver it on a student accommodation scheme as the tenants fail to follow recycling procedures. At the time of drafting this report officers were due to meet the developer to explore whether there were any realistic opportunities for raising the sustainability criteria of the development further.

9.5 Highways and access

9.5.1 The sloping topography currently presents challenges for pedestrian movement around the site. The scheme delivers improvements to pedestrian permeability and connectivity, reinforcing previously created routes and adding new ones. The network of routes provided will be enhanced by the provision of a sloping path from Portland Way along the north-south axis of the campus. This would deliver a new accessible route supplementing the accessible east-west route provided by the first phase of the development. In addition to the new public areas, the Calverley Street footway to the site frontage will be upgraded as part of the development to tie in with proposed improvements that should be realised by the completion of earlier phases of the campus development and the proposed hotel.

9.5.2 A Travel Plan submitted in support of the application sets out measures to encourage sustainable travel including new long stay and short stay cycle spaces. There would also be a public transport contribution of £24,380. The development would not provide any additional parking spaces. The existing spaces accessed from Woodhouse Lane would be available for use at the start and end of terms for dropping off and collecting students. One of the parking spaces is dedicated for use by the car club. Day to day servicing would be from a loading space provided on Calverley Street provided as part of the earlier phase of development.

9.5.3 The development provides an acceptable and appropriate response to issues of connectivity, accessibility and transportation in accordance with UDPR policies T2 and A4, and DCS policy CC3.

9.6 Landscape

- 9.6.1 The existing site comprises three distinct parcels of land. At the northern end there is a sloping lawned area; the area towards the middle is hardsurfaced whilst the southern portion is cleared land. The proposed landscape design is a rectilinear 'architectural' response to the dominant built forms and their layout.
- 9.6.2 Mature trees, primarily along the site frontage, enhance the appearance of the site and the streetscene. An intent is expressed to retain some of the existing boundary trees to Calverley Street. However the growing areas being retained for this purpose are constrained. The applicants will need to demonstrate how they will be able to retain the current ground levels around the trees within the new scheme, without causing disturbance or damage. Given the number of existing trees removed to facilitate earlier phases of development, retention of trees in this highly visible frontage location is all the more important. It may be that long-term management proposals could include for replacement of trees as they reach their full lifespan, and once new tree provision has been allowed to establish as strong features in their own right in the wider landscape.
- 9.6.3 The wave pattern in the soft landscape ground forms is an interesting and positive response to addressing the fall in levels across the site. However its success will depend upon carefully considered design detailing, the use of high quality materials, effective implementation and consistent long-term aftercare.
- 9.6.4 There is considerable use of hard surfacing in the central access route up from Calverley Street. Additional soft landscape elements should be considered for this area although it is recognised that the existence of a below ground level of building development limits what can be achieved. Trees in planters need to have sufficient volumes of soil for effective long-term growth to maturity. Without adequate growing conditions the trees will at best struggle and more likely fail. The additional use of trees for wind mitigation adds to the importance of securing the best growing conditions possible.
- 9.6.5 Services should be located within hard landscape areas to avoid conflict or potential disturbance of established planting. Service easements will impact on tree planting proposals, so both need to be considered in conjunction from the outset. Lighting proposals should work well within the landscape scheme both for safety and for extended use of external spaces. Well integrated lighting will enhance the overall quality of the external environment, creating somewhere to be appreciated and used rather than just spaces to be 'got through' on the way to other destinations.
- 9.6.6 The relationship between this scheme and the potential hotel development to the south-east needs to be considered. In the absence of the hotel development coming forward in the near future a positive boundary treatment needs to be identified as part of the current proposals.
- 9.6.7 As proposed, the landscaping and public realm proposals will enhance the streetscene and accord with UDPR Policies CC3, CC9, CC11, CC13 and CC31. However, detailed design and implementation of proposals are crucial to its initial success, and it needs to be demonstrated that 3 replacement trees for every removed tree (NRWLP policy Land 1) is achieved. Thereafter, there needs to be a positive and proactive management approach to the landscape.

9.7 Other issues

9.7.1 Officers have had a meeting with LMU to discuss other issues raised in their objection letter. Measures to control impacts of the construction process, such as noise and dust, would form the subject of planning conditions whilst other requirements, such as those relating to Health and Safety and Party Walls, would fall under the control of other relevant legislation. Following completion of the development the new pedestrian routes and public realm would be maintained by obligations contained in the section 106 agreement such that access around the site, and alongside the Portland and Calverley Buildings, would not be restricted.

9.8 Section 106

9.8.1 The Section 106 agreement will include the following:

- Public transport contribution £24,380.
- Implementation of Travel Plan and evaluation fee £500.
- Restriction to students in higher education.
- Accessibility to public areas.
- Employment and training initiatives.
- Section 106 management fee.

9.8.2 The Section 106 obligations are compliant with the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 Statutory Tests.

9.7 Conclusion

9.7.1 The proposed development represents the final element of the architect's masterplan when the site was acquired in 2010. The building form and design responds well to its context whilst new public spaces and pedestrian routes would integrate with, and reinforce, those provided by earlier phases of the development. Issues relating to wind, landscaping and the sustainable performance of the development remain to be agreed with officers. However, elsewhere, the proposals accord with the Development Plan and other material planning guidance. Accordingly, officers recommend that the application is delegated for approval subject to resolution of outstanding issues, appropriate conditions and the completion of a Section 106 agreement.

Background papers

Application file 13/04584/FU

Certificate of ownership : signed on behalf of Downing Property Services

Appendix 1

Minutes of the meeting of 29th August 2013

48 Preapp/13/00656 - Pre-application presentation of proposal for new student accommodation buildings - City Campus, Woodhouse Lane and Calverley Street LS1

Plans, including a revised location plan circulated prior to the meeting, together with graphics and a model were displayed at the meeting. A Members site visit had taken place earlier in the day.

The Panel considered a report of the Chief Planning Officer on preapplication proposals for two new student accommodation buildings at the former Leeds Metropolitan University's City Campus site; the proposals representing the third and final phase of the developer's masterplan.

Members received a presentation on the scheme on behalf of the developer. Members were informed that the proposals were for blocks, partly linked at ground floor level and providing student accommodation in a mix of studios and cluster flats, study and common room area and a small ancillary retail unit. A total of 410 bedspaces were proposed with 20 of these being DDA accessible. Areas of hard and soft landscaping would be provided which would include undulating lawns to address the changing levels on the site and new tree and shrub planting would enhance this publicly accessible space. The proposed materials were high quality pre-cast concrete and glazing with the use of some lighter colour materials to reflect the Portland Stone of the Civic Hall.

After hearing the presentation and viewing the model, Members commented on the following matters:

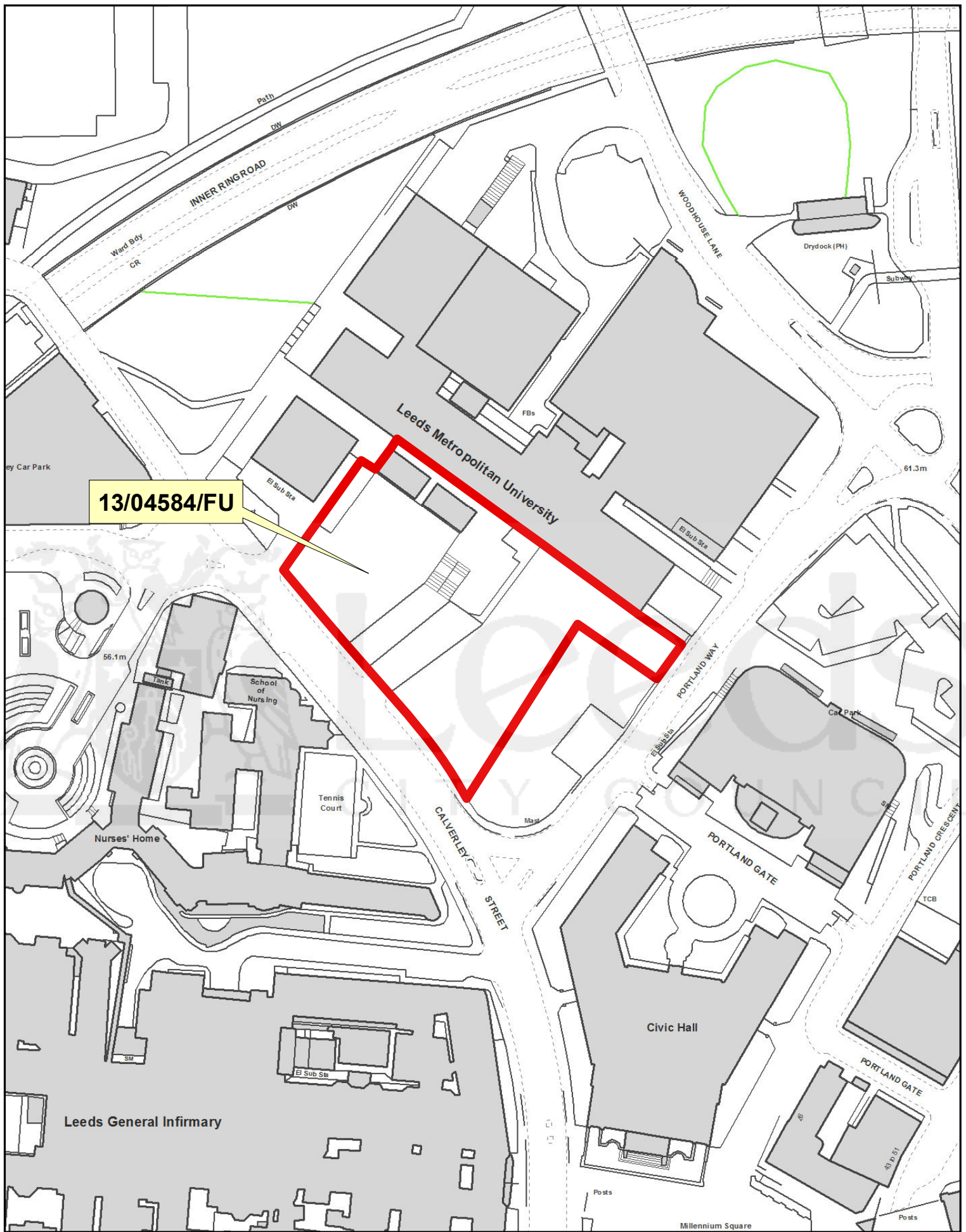
- the need for connectivity between the two buildings and the Rose Bowl and for improved access across Portland Way. Members were informed there was a new crossing approximately halfway along Portland Way, although it was accepted that this did not exactly align with the proposed pedestrian route through the development.
- the design of the proposals, with mixed views on this;
- that the design was sympathetic to the surrounding campus environment and the view that what was proposed was a continuation of the established grid pattern, whereas some slight move away from the existing buildings might be an improvement
- concern about how the public space would work and whether it would receive any sun
- whether there was a need for further student accommodation and that a cross-party Working Group had been established to look into this matter, had taken advice from a range of sources including Unipol and Renew; and was soon to report its recommendations to Executive Board and that the applicant would need to demonstrate to Panel there was a need for this development
- that there was unlikely to be another site more suitable for student accommodation and if approved, this could return some large houses in Headingley currently used for student housing, back into family homes

- the difficulties in assessing need as it could be that if this scheme was approved and developed, then other student schemes either in the pipeline or approved but not yet implemented, might not proceed
- whether some of the student accommodation schemes built 10–12 years ago and which were not full could be converted to residential accommodation and if so, the implications in terms of the loss of S106 contributions which would have been part of a residential scheme but not a student accommodation scheme.

In response to the specific points raised in the report, Members provided the following comments:

- concerning the appropriateness of additional student accommodation in this area, having regard to local and national policies, the supply of other consented schemes and the proximity to the universities, Members questioned the need for further student accommodation and was of the view that the applicant would need to outline the argument for this development and produce evidence in support of it
- regarding the proposed layout and overall massing of the development, the majority view was that this was acceptable
- in respect of the proposed use of materials and the overall architectural approach, this was considered to be acceptable as it fitted in with the design of other buildings on site, but that if approved, a high quality appearance must be delivered
- on landscaping, the general approach to this was considered to be acceptable and that new trees should be planted in suitable ground conditions to ensure that the trees would thrive and be positive additions to the landscape
- that in general terms the Panel considered that the development produced an acceptable and appropriate response to issues of connectivity and accessibility, although concerns remained about access over Portland Way and that there would be a need
- for contributions for public transport

RESOLVED - To note the report, the presentation and the comments now made



13/04584/FU

CITY PLANS PANEL

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SCALE : 1/1500

