



Report of the DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT

NORTH WEST AREA COMMITTEE (INNER)

DATE : 29th June 2006

Subject: Kirkstall Road Renaissance Area Planning Framework

Electoral Wards Affected:

All

Specific Implications For:

Ethnic minorities

Women

Disabled people

Narrowing the Gap

Council
Function

Delegated Executive
Function available
for Call In

Delegated Executive
Function not available for
Call In Details set out in the
report

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report updates the situation regarding the re-development proposals along Kirkstall Road, around the former Yorkshire Chemicals site.

A planning framework has been prepared to promote regeneration of the area along Kirkstall Road around the Yorkshire Chemicals site. This framework was recently adopted as an informal planning tool.

The emerging developer proposals for the former Yorkshire Chemicals site include a mixed use development comprising office, residential, leisure, retail, public space, new road infrastructure and car parking. A planning application has not yet been submitted but is expected in the near future.

1.0 Purpose Of This Report

1.1 To update members on the progress in preparing the Kirkstall Road Renaissance Area Planning Framework which will inform planning decisions on planning applications in this area to the west of the city centre.

2.0 Background Information

- 2.1 A planning framework has been prepared to promote regeneration of the area along Kirkstall Road around the Yorkshire Chemicals site. The map at Appendix 1 identifies the overall framework area and six sub-areas. The framework document sets out key principles and options for the redevelopment of land and buildings. It was initially envisaged that the framework would be adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance. However, changes to the planning system and the regulations concerning preparation of similar documents has meant this is no longer possible.
- 2.2 Preparation of a draft document was begun in February 2003, with an early draft of the framework available in June 2003. Upon early internal consultation it was determined that the area covered by the framework was too small and more detailed design advice was necessary. In January 2004, the Council held a design workshop with a range of stakeholders. The participants: landowners, developers, consultants, architects / urban designers, community representatives and officers from several council departments, expressed a surprising degree of agreement about the strategic importance of this area and how it might be redeveloped. The draft planning framework issued for consultation in Summer 2005 reflected the outcomes of the urban design workshop and further internal consultations.
- 2.3 The document promotes the regeneration of the area, and sets out key principles and options for redevelopment of land and buildings. It was produced largely in response to developers/landowners interest and planning activities in the area, such as the A65 Quality Bus initiative and the Waterfront Strategy.
- 2.4 The key opportunities identified in the framework are:
- To protect and enhance local job opportunities, especially for residents of the adjoining areas of Armley, Burley, Kirkstall and Wortley and to examine the feasibility of introducing new specialised uses e.g. education and research associated with the University and new media related industries.
 - To plan the area in a co-coordinated and comprehensive manner, avoiding fragmented, unrelated development.
 - To maximise the area's strategic location as a key connector between the City Centre, local communities of Burley and Kirkstall and the waterfront.
 - To maximise benefits of Quality Bus Initiatives proposed for the A65 (Kirkstall Road) and Burley Road.
 - To create a new urban character with strong urban form, new frontages to boulevards and river fronts and inner block faces providing an attractive transition between the City Centre and the neighbouring areas.
 - To create an urban area with its own distinctive identity and sense of place, thus realising the broader vision of Renaissance Leeds and aims of the Unitary Development Plan and Leeds City Centre Urban Design Strategy.
 - To improve access to the area particularly for pedestrians, cyclists and public transport users.
 - To maximise benefits of the waterways and 'island' as the city's 'green lung,' providing an attractive working, living and recreation environment and enabling walking and cycling parallel with road arteries to western destinations.
 - To create an attractive, safe and vibrant public realm which will:
 - provide amenity and recreational space for local people, residents – workers;
 - enable closer integration with adjoining neighbourhoods; and
 - act as a catalyst for regeneration.

2.5 Amendments to the draft version of the framework were recently approved at the meeting of Planning Board dated 16th May 2006. A revised version incorporating these amendment should be available shortly.

3.0 Main Issues

3.1 Several large sites fall within the area covered by the framework. Of these larger, key sites the proposals for the redevelopment of the former Yorkshire Chemicals site are most advanced. The site is located to the south of Kirkstall Road and comprises the former Yorkshire Chemicals site along with the island immediately to the south of this; lying between the River Aire and the Leeds-Liverpool Canal. The total site area is 4.7 hectares. This site falls within Areas 2 and 3 of the above planning framework. A planning application has not yet been submitted for the redevelopment of this site.

3.2 A progress report on the emerging developer proposals for the former chemical site was reported to Central Plans Panel on 2nd March 2006.

4.0 The Pre-Application Proposal

4.1 The proposed scheme is a mixed use development comprising:

- Office accommodation in the form of large footplate offices facing Kirkstall Road, smaller/medium size office space lining the routes through the site, and other business space eg. live work accommodation.
- In excess of 1,000 residential units including flats, 2 storey units within larger blocks and terraced family housing
- Leisure uses (bars / restaurants etc.) lining the proposed streets and squares
- Retail space
- Possible Community Uses eg. doctor's surgeries, dentists etc.
- Public space
- Associated car parking

4.2 The developers have undertaken their own master planning exercise for the Kirkstall Road corridor and examined how their site fits into that plan.

4.3 The developer's master plan envisages a new Boulevard to Kirkstall Road, access points at appropriate points off the boulevard to serve a main spine road running parallel to Kirkstall Road and serving the full master plan area. Essentially the plan divides the area up into a grid of development blocks/plots, of which the former chemical works forms one of these plots. These plots are separated by east-west and north-south pedestrian/vehicle routes enabling buildings to front the routes and new squares. A new riverside walk on the northern bank of the river is presented as an element of the pedestrian network. There is also the potential for a new bridge link across the river to the island.

5.0 Implications For Council Policy And Governance

5.1 The framework's preparation has been informed by the Renaissance Leeds Document, the Leeds Unitary Development Plan, Unitary Development Plan Review, relevant Supplementary Planning Guidance, emerging Local Development Framework documents and discussions relating to the future of the whole of Kirkstall Valley. It incorporates Quality Bus Initiatives and the Waterfront Strategy.

5.2 The proposals in the framework do not prejudice further planning for the Kirkstall Valley and will be taken into account in that broader framework.

5.3 The framework is not included as a piece of work (such as a Supplementary Planning Document) to be formally incorporated into the Local Development Scheme. It is an interim tool which sets direction and vision for how this part of the city should develop while other work is progressing. It does not add any new policies; it merely provides detailed interpretation of adopted policy in relation to potential redevelopment in the area.

6.0 Legal and Resource Implications

6.1 Further public consultation will be required as proposals progress.

6.2 No additional resource implications arising as a result of this report.

7.0 Conclusions

7.1 A planning framework has been prepared to promote regeneration of the area along Kirkstall Road around the Yorkshire Chemicals site.

7.2 The emerging developer proposals for the former chemical site include a mixed use development comprising office, residential, leisure, retail public space, new road infrastructure and car parking. A planning application has not yet been submitted but is expected in the near future.

8.0 Recommendations

8.1 Members note the contents of the report.