
Report of the Chief Planning Officer

CITY PLANS PANEL

Date: 21st June 2018

Subject: Pre-application presentation for Leeds Flood Alleviation Scheme Phase 2 (PREAPP/18/00332) at River Aire through the areas of Leeds City Centre, Kirkstall Valley And Newlay

PRE-APPLICANTS: Leeds City Council

Electoral Wards Affected:

**Hunslet & Riverside, Armley, Kirkstall,
Bramley & Stanningley, Calverley &
Farsley**

☐ Yes Ward Members consulted – (but on wider project)

Specific Implications For:

Equality and Diversity ☐

Community Cohesion ☐

Narrowing the Gap ☐

RECOMMENDATION: This report is brought to Panel for information. The applicant will be asked to present the emerging scheme to allow Members to consider and comment on the proposals.

1.0 INTRODUCTION:

- 1.1 This presentation is intended to inform Members of the emerging proposals for the Leeds Flood Alleviation Scheme Phase 2 (LFAS2). Following construction and completion on site of Phase 1 (City Centre, Hol Beck, Knostrop, Woodlesford), the applicant has submitted an Outline Business Case to Central Government for funding purposes to assist in part financing of the £112.1m scheme. Members will be asked to comment on this emerging scheme.

2.0 SITE AND SURROUNDINGS:

- 2.1 The scheme covers a stretch of waterway totalling 8km in length. It is mainly centred on the River Aire and extends from the City Centre (south of Whitehall Road) through the Kirkstall Road corridor, along to Armley Mills, onto St Ann's Mill, passing Kirkstall Bridge / Kirkstall Retail Park, south of Kirkstall Abbey, onto Calverley where an attenuation storage area is proposed and finally reaching just into the Bradford Metropolitan District boundary at Appleley Bridge. Additional Natural Flood

Management proposals, including a substantial tree planting programme in upper catchments of the Aire (contributing to the creation of the Government backed initiative The Northern Forest), but although part of the wider LFAS2 project, these measures are being undertaken separate to the pending planning application.

- 2.2 The surrounding context therefore is a mixture of City Centre residential and office developments, cleared development land, light and heavy industry, retail and leisure parks (including Cardigan Fields, Kirkstall) before emerging into sub-urban and a more rural / agricultural setting further upstream.

3.0 PROPOSAL

- 3.1 The scheme proposal aligns with the Upper Flood Risk Management Strategy which promotes a 1 in 200 year (0.5%) standard of protection (SoP) + climate change to reduce the risk of flooding in developed areas of Leeds.

- 3.2 This consists of:

- Enhancing the ability / performance of the functional flood plain at Calverley by provision of an embankment and active control structure to hold back the flow during high return period flood events. This would provide capacity of 0.7M cubic metres of water storage (giving potential to reduce flood flows by 5%). This also includes an access road and control building.
- Providing linear defences at low lying locations to protect existing assets. The selection of defence type will be appropriate to each location and include property level protection, embankments, masonry clad concrete walls, sheet piles and glazed panels, similar to those provided as part of the Phase 1 scheme. These would be built to 1:200 year SoP + climate change to 2039 (assuming attenuation is also provided). These walls vary from 1.2m to 1.5m high (with some isolated localised sections at 2.5m high)
- Removal of obstructions to flow including replacing the redundant bridge at Milford Place with a new bridge, raising of the existing pedestrian footbridge at Milford Place, removal of redundant sub-structure to the Redcote Lane bridge* and removal of a redundant pipe bridge adjacent to Washington Street.
- Provide new sluices, flap valves and flow control structures to protect the listed building at Armley Mills Industrial Museum.
- Provide new flow control structures to manage flood risk from the historic goits at Kirkstall Abbey and St Ann's Mills.
- Pumping measures for surface water runoff.
- Scour protection to river banks.

Additionally it should be noted that in respect of Phase 2:

- advanced works to include flood protection at Stourton Industrial Estate have been already granted planning permission under ref. 17/06634/LA and have commenced on site
- a wide programme of upland / upstream tree planting outside of the Leeds district is being developed (but which does not form part of the pending planning application)
- *the removal of Redcote Lane bridge is part of project but which does not require planning permission

- 3.3 Furthermore to maximise future economic regeneration benefits, enhancements arising from the scheme have been planned including provision of access

improvements along the corridor and woodland creation at Kirkstall Valley Nature Park and the upland planting proposals mentioned above in paragraph 2.1.

3.4 Similar to Phase 1, the exact detail of linear works walling materials and such like are not specified at this stage and it is expected much of the detail of this, will be controlled through future planning conditions to reflect the differing characteristics of surrounding town and landscapes along the route.

3.5 The project objectives can be summarised as follows:

- To reduce flood risk to people and property as much as can be economically justified, providing a good standard of protection to the areas currently at risk.
- To stimulate sustainable economic growth in developed and previously developed floodplain areas, where there is no scope to restore these to functional floodplain.
- To increase the ability of people and businesses to cope with, and rapidly recover from, the impact of floods.
- To work in partnership with communities and stakeholders to create a great place for living; protecting and enhancing the natural environment and landscape, whilst improving access to recreational opportunities.
- To demonstrate best value for money.

4.0 HISTORY OF NEGOTIATIONS AND RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

4.1 Officers have had a series of meetings with the applicants to inform and develop the scheme detail further to site specific characteristics, opportunities and constraints faced including nature conservation, heritage conservation interests, public accessibility and recreation.

5.0 RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES

5.1 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied, only to the extent that it is relevant, proportionate and necessary to do so.

6 and 7: sets out that planning should be committed to achievement of sustainable development and that the system should perform three key roles: economic, social and environmental.

It identifies 12 core planning principles (para 17) which include that planning should:

- Proactively drive and support sustainable economic development to deliver homes
- Seek high quality design and a good standard of amenity for existing and future occupants.

18: The Government is committed to securing economic growth in order to create jobs and prosperity.

61: Visual appearance and architecture of individual buildings are important factors alongside connections between people and places, integration of new development into natural, built and historic environment.

66: states that applicants will be expected to work closely with those directly affected by development to evolve designs that take account of the views of the community.

69: Planning policies / decisions should aim to achieve places which promote safe and accessible environments where crime and disorder and the fear of crime do not undermine quality of life and community cohesion.

75. Planning policies should protect and enhance public rights of way and access. Local authorities should seek opportunities to provide better facilities for users, for example by adding links to existing rights of way networks including National Trails.

90. Certain other forms of development are also not inappropriate in Green Belt provided they preserve the openness of the Green Belt and do not conflict with the purposes of including land in Green Belt. These are: • mineral extraction; • engineering operations; • local transport infrastructure which can demonstrate a requirement for a Green Belt location; • the re-use of buildings provided that the buildings are of permanent and substantial construction; and • development brought forward under a Community Right to Build Order.

93. Planning plays a key role in helping shape places to secure radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, minimising vulnerability and providing resilience to the impacts of climate change, and supporting the delivery of renewable and low carbon energy and associated infrastructure. This is central to the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development.

94. Local planning authorities should adopt proactive strategies to mitigate and adapt to climate change, taking full account of flood risk, coastal change and water supply and demand considerations.

109. The planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by: • protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, geological conservation interests and soils; • recognising the wider benefits of ecosystem services; • minimising impacts on biodiversity and providing net gains in biodiversity where possible, contributing to the Government's commitment to halt the overall decline in biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures; • preventing both new and existing development from contributing to or being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability; and • remediating and mitigating despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, where appropriate.

131: LPAs should take account of desirability / viability of heritage assets consistent with their conservation; the positive contribution of heritage assets to sustainable economically viable communities; new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

5.2 Development Plan

5.2.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires the application to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. For the purposes of decision making, the Development Plan for Leeds currently comprises the following documents:

- The Leeds Core Strategy (adopted November 2014).

- Saved UDP Policies (2006), included as Appendix 1 of the Core Strategy.
- The Natural Resources & Waste Local Plan (NRWLP, adopted January 2013) including revised policies Minerals 13 and 14 (adopted September 2015).
- Aire Valley Area Action Plan (adopted November 2017).
- Any Neighbourhood Plan, once adopted.

5.2.2 Adopted Leeds Core Strategy

The site is located across a variety of settings along the river corridor and includes some areas of greenspace such as Kirkstall Valley Nature Reserve and Green Belt (below Kirkstall Abbey going west)

Relevant Core Strategy policies include:

Spatial Policy 1 – Location of Development - sets out the broad spatial framework for the location and scale of development. Part vi) recognizes the key role of new infrastructure supporting communities and economic activity.

Spatial Policy 11 – Transport Infrastructure Investment Priorities – Sets out a range of strategic measures. These infrastructure improvements/interventions which are also supported by the demand management measures outlined in Policy T1 including iv) expansion of the Leeds Core Cycle Network to improve local connectivity and v) Improved facilities for pedestrians to promote safety and accessibility, particularly connectivity between the ‘Rim’ and the City Centre,.

Spatial Policy 13 – Strategic Green Infrastructure – outlines that the Council will seek to enhance key corridors in the Leeds District including Kirkstall Valley Park.

Policy CC3: Improving connectivity between the City Centre and neighbouring communities – refers to support for improved walking and cycling connections where opportunities arise.

Policy P10 - Design - 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.

Policy P11 – Conservation - Development to respect designated and undesignated heritage assets

Policy P12 – Landscape – Development should conserve and protect distinctive landscapes.

Policy G1: Enhancing and extending Green Infrastructure

Where a development is considered to be acceptable within or adjoining areas defined as Green Infrastructure on Map 16 or on any future LDF Allocation Documents, development proposals should ensure that:

- (i) Green Infrastructure/corridor function of the land is retained and improved, particularly in areas of growth,
- (ii) Where appropriate, the opportunity is taken to extend Green Infrastructure by linking green spaces or by filling in gaps in Green Infrastructure corridors, including (where relevant) extending these into Leeds City Centre. Street trees and green roofs are particularly encouraged,
- (iii) A landscaping scheme is provided which deals positively with the transition between development and any adjoining open land,

- (iv) The opportunity is taken to increase appropriate species of woodland cover in the District,
- (v) Provision for and retention of biodiversity and wildlife,
- (iv) Opportunities are taken to protect and enhance the Public Rights of Way (PROW) network through avoiding unnecessary diversions and by adding new links.

Policy G8 – Protection of Important Species and Habitats - Development will not be permitted which would seriously harm, either directly or indirectly, any sites designated of national, regional or local importance for biodiversity or geological importance or which would cause any harm to internationally designated sites, or would cause harm to the population or conservation status of UK or West Yorkshire Biodiversity Action Plan (UK BAP and WY BAP) Priority species and habitats. In considering development proposals affecting any designated sites and UK or WY BAP Priority species or habitats, the needs of the development and the requirements to maintain and enhance biological and geological diversity will be examined.

Other than the above requirement particular account will be taken of:

- The extent and significance of potential damage to the interest of any national, regional or local site, or UK or WY BAP Priority species or habitat, and
- Demonstration that the need for the development outweighs the importance of any national, regional or local site, or UK or WY BAP Priority species or habitat, and
- The extent that any adverse impact could be reduced and minimised through protection, mitigation, enhancement and compensatory measures imposed through planning conditions or obligations and which would be subject to appropriate monitoring arrangements.

Policy G9 – Biodiversity Improvements –

Development will be required to demonstrate:

- (i) That there will be an overall net gain for biodiversity commensurate with the scale of the development, including a positive contribution to the habitat network through habitat protection, creation and enhancement, and
- (ii) The design of new development, including landscape, enhances existing wildlife habitats and provides new areas and opportunities for wildlife, and
- (iii) That there is no significant adverse impact on the integrity and connectivity of the Leeds Habitat Network.

Policy EN5 – Managing Flood Risk – parts iv) confirm that making space for flood water in high flood risk areas and vii) the development of the Leeds Flood Alleviation Scheme are important elements in managing and mitigating flood risk.

5.2.3 Leeds Unitary Development Plan Review 2006 (UDPR) – Saved Policies

- GP5 all relevant planning considerations
- N1A Protection of Allotments
- N6 Protection of Playing Pitches
- N8 Urban Green Corridors
- N17 Listed Buildings Character and Appearance
- N20 Conservation Areas and Retention of Features
- N35 Development and Agricultural Land
- N37 Special Landscape Areas
- N39B Watercourses and New Development
- N43 Informal Outdoor Recreation
- BC7 Development in Conservation Areas

- LD1 Landscape Schemes

5.2.4 Leeds Natural Resources and Waste DPD 2013

The Natural Resources and Waste Development Plan Document (Local Plan) is part of the Local Development Framework. The plan sets out where land is needed to enable the City to manage resources, like minerals, energy, waste and water over the next 15 years, and identifies specific actions which will help use natural resources in a more efficient way. Relevant policies include:

- Water 3 Functional Flood Plain
- Water 4 Development in Flood Risk Areas
- Water 6 Flood Risk Assessments
- Water 7 Surface Water Run-off
- Land 2 Development and Trees

6.0 **KEY ISSUES**

6.1 Creating Sustainable Communities

6.1.1 LFAS2 is of significant strategic importance to the creation of sustainable communities in Leeds, by aiming to give additional flood protection to a large number of residential and commercial properties, many of which lie in high risk flood zone 3 catchment of the River Aire. Although historical flood events have been recorded along the Aire since 1866, in more recent years, there have now been four significant flood events since 2000, with the worst, Boxing Day 2015, seeing damaging flood levels to communities across West and Central Leeds, which affected 678 commercial properties and 3368 residential properties. The Leeds Flood Alleviation has been split into phases due to funding reasons. Following the on-site construction completion of Phase 1, the importance of Phase 2 in providing additional protection to properties affected (primarily upstream of the City's Railway Station) is crucial to further safeguarding residential and economic investment within the City.

6.1.2 Policy EN5 of the Core Strategy underlines the Council's support for the development of a scheme. Spatial Policy 1 recognises the role of infrastructure like this supporting sustainable communities. This is directly related to the sustainable development principles outlined in the heart of the NPPF. Communities within the route corridor are still recovering from the effects of the 2015 Boxing Day floods.

6.1.3 A number of businesses within the Kirkstall Road corridor have relocated or ceased trading. Leeds is the third largest employment centre in the UK contributing £16.3 billion gross added value to the economy. The scheme intends to sustain business confidence in Leeds. The scheme would also help safeguard a key transportation corridor into and out of Leeds City Centre, notably the Airedale / Wharfedale train line, which currently only benefits from a 1 in 2 years standard of protection. The A65 which is a major arterial route along the corridor and into the City will also benefit from enhanced protection.

6.2 Visual and Environmental Impact

6.2.1 The scheme aims to also protect and conserve nature conservation interests along the route corridor and where opportunities arise enhance them through local projects such as at Kirkstall Valley Nature Reserve (improvements in accessibility).

- 6.2.2 The project is based on a catchment-wide approach to options identification and appraisal between Leeds City Council working in partnership with the Environment Agency and Bradford City Council (a small section of flood defence works are proposed in the Apperley Bridge area). The project aims to provide the most cost effective and sustainable solutions in the long term. This also includes the Natural Flood Management objectives which although not to be included within the pending planning application, form a significant part of the ongoing commitment of the project to sustainably address flood risk through a variety of measures.
- 6.2.3 The water storage control structure at Calverley would be used only in times of heightened flood risk; otherwise it is considered it would largely remain operational as agricultural land. In reference to its Green Belt setting, the means to landscape these works gently using relatively shallow new embankments, natural contours and a control structure will continue to leave the land permanently open.
- 6.2.4 The heights of the linear defences are set (generally) to low levels at less than 1.5m high (some localised sections are higher at 1.8m or more). These have been designed to the lowest possible levels in accordance with the need to provide the 1:200 year + climate change SoP desired. The exact choice of materials and precise design very much dependent on the specific characteristics of the area's surrounding context and factors including pedestrian connectivity and permeability.
- 6.2.5 The site specific design details are still emerging but individual approaches are being considered on a site specific basis which will sensitively protect nature conservation and heritage conservation interests (considerations of setting and special protection to listed buildings including Kirkstall Abbey as an Ancient Monument). The scheme will also protect and enhance nature conservation interests through the route. A suite of documentation to this effect has been submitted as part of an Environmental Impact Assessment Scoping Report.

6.3 Future additional Works

- 6.3.1 The scheme would also like to provide enhanced recreational opportunities through the route corridor with cycle-ways, improved footbridge crossings and visitor enhancements to local assets such as Kirkstall Valley Nature Reserve. However as this is subject to successfully securing additional future funding, these measures may likely be contained within a supplementary application alongside the main works application.

7.0 **CONCLUSION:**

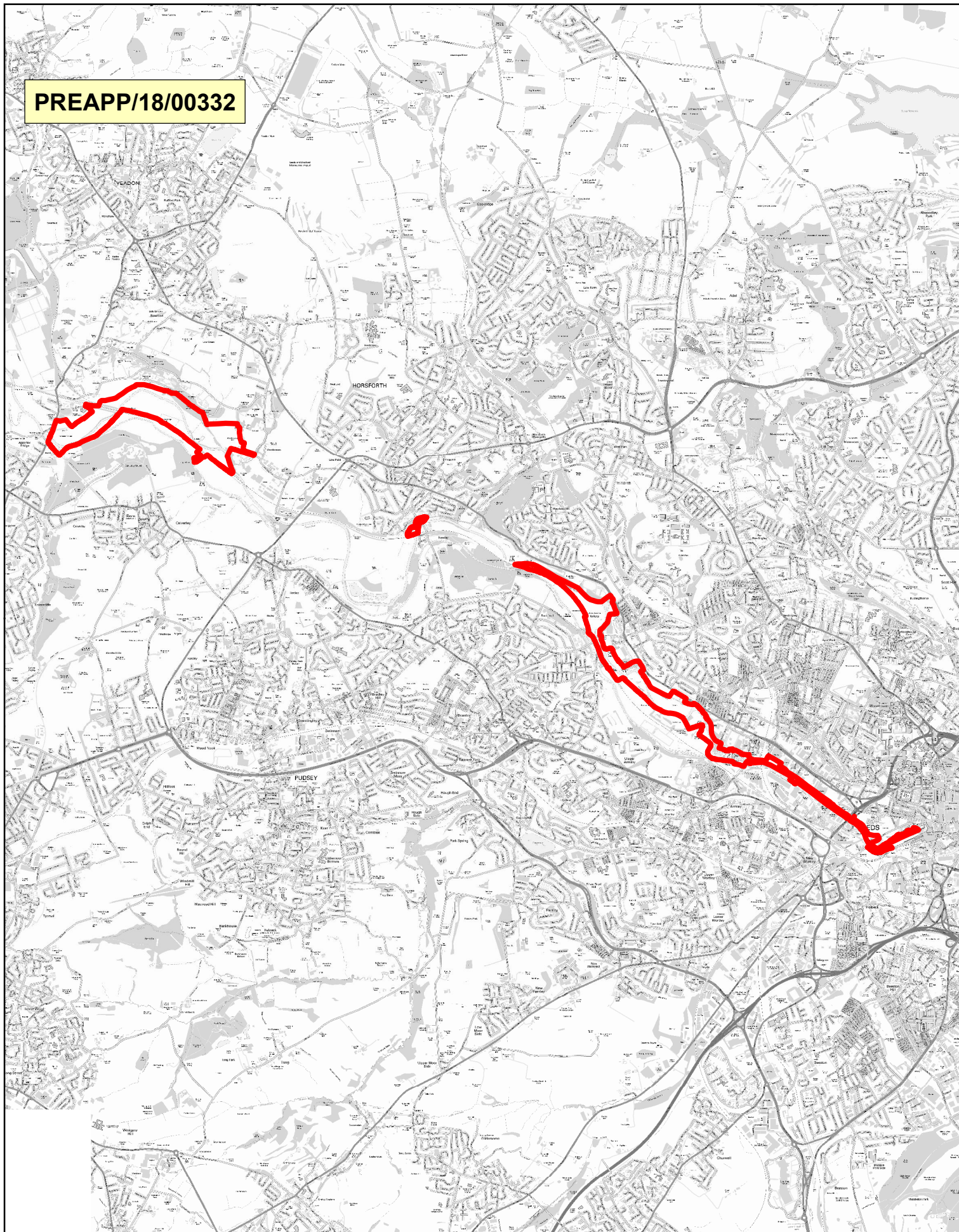
7.1 Members are asked to comment on particularly:

1. **Can Members confirm their support in principle for the continued development of Phase 2 of the Leeds Flood Alleviation Scheme?**
2. **Do Members have any site specific comments to make about the scheme to help in forming ongoing design planning and detailing?**

BACKGROUND PAPERS:

Pre-application file: PREAPP/18/00332

PREAPP/18/00332



CITY PLANS PANEL

© Crown copyright and database rights 2018 Ordnance Survey 100019567

PRODUCED BY CITY DEVELOPMENT, GIS MAPPING & DATA TEAM, LEEDS CITY COUNCIL

SCALE : NTS

