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**Report of the Chief Planning Officer**

**CITY PLANS PANEL**

**13<sup>th</sup> September 2018**

**Pre-application presentation of proposed residential development at Lisbon Square, Lisbon Street, Leeds LS1 4LY (PREAPP/18/00239)**

**Applicant – SoCity Leeds Ltd**

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**Electoral Wards Affected:**

**Little London and Woodhouse**

Yes Ward Members consulted

**Specific Implications For:**

Equality and Diversity

Community Cohesion

Narrowing the Gap

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**RECOMMENDATION: This report is brought to Plans Panel for information. The Developer will present the details of the proposed development to allow Members to consider and comment on the proposals at this stage.**

**1.0 Introduction**

1.1 This presentation is intended to inform Members of the emerging proposals for a new multi-storey residential development on land presently occupied by three-storey office blocks dating from the mid-1980's.

**2.0 Site and surroundings**

2.1 The site comprises three similar, three-storey, red brick and pitched slate roof office buildings. The buildings are grouped to form three sides of a courtyard primarily used for parking and access to a basement car park. Ebor Court, beyond the western boundary to the site, is a three-storey flat-roofed building of a similar age effectively forming the fourth side to the courtyard.

2.3 Public highway borders the site on three sides. Lisbon Street to the east terminates at a turning head immediately south of a slip road off the Inner Ring Road. Skinner Street runs along the southern boundary connecting Lisbon Street with Croppergate. The existing building line fronting Lisbon Street and Skinner Street is set back with

soft landscaped areas to the front providing some visual relief to the street. A shared pedestrian / cycle path passes the northern side of the site forming an extension of Westgate.

- 2.3 The Inner Ring Road (A58M), off-slip to Wellington Street and A58 run to the north of the site at a slightly higher level. Surface car parks on the east side of Lisbon Street represent the former site of the International Pool. West One offices at Castle House to the south-east rise to 13 storeys. Cleared land to the south-west of Ebor Court was occupied by derelict office buildings for a long period of time prior to their demolition last year. Office buildings on the southern side of Skinner Street, facing the site and Grove Street / Wellington Street, vary in height between 3 and 5 storeys.

### **3.0 Proposals**

- 3.1 The first phase of development would involve the demolition of the northernmost building facing Westgate / Inner Ring Road. It would be replaced by a part 20, part 23 storey building with a similar footprint to that existing although projecting closer to Lisbon Street.
- 3.2 Other than for pedestrian entrances, reception and management areas, the ground floor would be laid out as co-working space, a café and a gym.
- 3.3 Upper floors would be occupied by residential accommodation. 146 apartments are identified in the first phase. There would be a mix of 1 (69), 2 (74) and 3 (3) bedroom apartments. The minimum size of the one-bedroom units would be 38m<sup>2</sup>; the smallest two-bedroom units would be 63m<sup>2</sup>; and the three-bed apartments would be 90m<sup>2</sup>.
- 3.4 Vehicular access into the site would be taken from Lisbon Street, in a similar location to that existing, to a basement car park and plant area.
- 3.5 It is ultimately proposed to demolish the three existing buildings. Later phases are also intended to comprise residential development. Albeit proposed massing has not been confirmed at this stage initial indications illustrated that the buildings would gradually step up in height from approximately 5 and 7 storeys on Skinner Street, 12 to 14 storeys on Lisbon Street to the first phase of the development (20 to 23 storeys) fronting Westgate.

### **4.0 Relevant planning history**

- 4.1 Planning permission was granted on 18<sup>th</sup> July 1983 for 3, three-storey offices blocks with basement car parking spaces (H/20/170/83).
- 4.2 There is an extant planning permission for the construction of a part 10, part 28 storey building comprising offices, flats and commercial space on cleared land to the south-west of Ebor Court previously occupied by Bridge House and Compton House (10/03459/EXT).

### **5.0 Consultation responses**

- 5.1 LCC Highways – No objection in principle, subject to further information on access, parking, servicing and construction and the submission of a Transport Assessment and Travel Plan.

- 5.2 LCC Conservation - The buildings to be demolished have very little, if any, significance as does the immediate context. The impact on heritage assets further afield such as the Town Hall should be tested by verified views.
- 5.3 LCC Flood Risk Management - The proposed development is located in Flood Zone 2 and a Flood Risk Assessment will be required. If practicable permeable paving, green roofs or roof gardens and green sustainable urban drainage systems should be utilised. A 50% reduction in the existing runoff would be considered acceptable. Separate foul and surface water drainage systems will be required and the drainage should be designed for the 1% AEP critical storm plus climate change event.
- 5.4 LCC Contaminated Land Team - A minimum of a Phase 1 Desk Study Report will be required in support of the application.
- 5.5 LCC Landscape - Street level landscape treatment should be considered creatively as part of the design process in terms of suitable compact and robust planting and materials to create as pleasing a setting for the building and interface with the wider streetscene as possible.
- 5.6 LCC Environmental Studies Transport Strategy Team – A noise assessment should be submitted with the application including current noise levels, those expected at different heights/façades of the proposed apartment block, together with proposed noise mitigation measures as appropriate (a glazing and ventilation strategy), such that the internal noise levels quoted within BS 8233 will be achieved.

## **6.0 Policy**

### **6.1 Development Plan**

6.1.1 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 for this proposal, 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).

### **6.2 Leeds Core Strategy (CS)**

6.2.1 Relevant Core Strategy policies include:

Spatial Policy 1 prioritises the redevelopment of previously developed land in a way that respects and enhances the local character and identity of places and neighbourhoods.

Spatial Policy 3 seeks to maintain and enhance the role of the City Centre as an economic driver for the District and City Region, by comprehensively planning the redevelopment and re-use of vacant and under-used sites for mixed use development and areas of public space; enhancing streets and creating a network of open and green spaces to make the City Centre more attractive; and improving connections between the City Centre and adjoining neighbourhoods.

Spatial Policy 7 sets out the spatial distribution of the district wide housing requirement between Housing Market Characteristic Areas. The site is in the City Centre with a requirement to provide 10,200 units (2012-28)

Spatial Policy 11 includes a priority related to improved facilities for pedestrians to promote safety and accessibility, particularly connectivity between the edges of the City Centre and the City Centre itself; measures to deliver safer roads; the provision of infrastructure to serve new development; and provision for people with impaired mobility.

Policy CC1 outlines the planned growth within the City Centre including at least 655,000sqm of office floorspace and 10,200 dwellings.

Policy CC3 states new development will need to provide and improve walking and cycling routes connecting the City Centre with adjoining neighbourhoods, and improve connections with the City Centre.

Policy H3 states that housing development should meet or exceed 65 dwellings per hectare in the City Centre.

Policy H4 states that developments should include an appropriate mix of dwelling types and sizes to address needs measured over the long term.

Policy H5 identifies affordable housing requirements.

Policy EC3 safeguards existing employment land noting that change of use to non-employment uses will only be permitted (i) where the proposal would not result in the loss of a deliverable employment site; (ii) where existing buildings and land are considered to be non-viable in terms of market attractiveness, business operations, age, condition and or compatibility with adjacent uses or (iii) the proposal will deliver a mixed use development which continues to provide for a range of local employment opportunities and would not undermine the viability of the remaining employment site.

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 that development protects and enhance the district's historic assets in particular, historically and locally important buildings, skylines and views.

Policies T1 and T2 identify transport management and accessibility requirements to ensure new development is adequately served by highways and public transport, and with safe and secure access for pedestrians, cyclists and people with impaired mobility.

Policy G9 states that development will need to demonstrate biodiversity improvements.

Policies EN1 and EN2 set targets for CO<sup>2</sup> reduction and sustainable design and construction, and at least 10% low or zero carbon energy production on-site.

Policy EN5 identifies requirements to manage flood risk.

Policy ID2 states that section 106 planning obligations will be required as part of a planning permission where this is necessary, directly related to the development,

and reasonably related in scale and kind in order to make a specific development acceptable and where a planning condition would not be effective.

### **6.3 Saved Unitary Development Plan Review policies (UDPR)**

#### **6.3.1 Relevant Saved Policies include:**

- Policy GP5 states that all relevant planning considerations to be resolved.
- Policy BD2 requires that new buildings complement and enhance existing skylines, vistas and landmarks.
- BD4 states that all mechanical plant and associated pipework should normally be contained within the envelope of the building.
- Policy BD5 states that a satisfactory level of amenity for occupants and surroundings should be provided.
- Policy LD1 identifies the criteria for landscape schemes.
- Policy N25 requires boundaries of sites to be designed in a positive manner.

### **6.4 Natural Resources & Waste Local Plan**

#### **6.4.1 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:**

- Air 1 management of air quality through new development
- Water 4 development in flood risk areas
- Water 6 flood risk assessments
- Water 7 surface water run-off
- Land 1 contaminated land

### **6.5 Site Allocations Plan Submission Draft (SAP)**

The site is not specifically identified in the SAP.

### **6.6 Core Strategy Selective Review (Submission Draft)**

#### **6.6.1 A selective review of the Leeds Core Strategy is presently being undertaken (CSSR). The CSSR includes a review of the housing requirement 2017-2033; the distribution of housing; affordable housing; housing standards; city centre green space; and climate change reduction policies. The submission draft plan was submitted to the Secretary of State for Housing and Local Government on 9 August 2018 and is evidence of the Local Planning Authority's emerging policy position.**

### **6.7 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) July 2018**

#### **6.7.1 The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied (para 1), and is a material consideration in planning decisions (para 2). It states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development (para 7). So that sustainable development is pursued in a positive way at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development (paras 10-11). It states that decision makers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible (para 38). The Framework sets policies on the following issues which are relevant to this planning application proposal (including section numbers):**

- 2 Achieving sustainable development
- 4 Decision making
- 5 Delivering a sufficient supply of homes
- 6 Building a strong competitive economy
- 7 Ensuring the vitality of town centres
- 8 Promoting healthy and safe communities
- 9 Promoting sustainable transport
- 11 Making effective use of land
- 12 Achieving well designed places
- 14 Meeting the challenge of climate change and flooding
- 16 Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

## 6.8 **Supplementary planning guidance**

- Parking SPD
- Accessible Leeds SPD
- Street Design Guide SPD
- Travel Plans SPD
- Tall Buildings SPD
- Building for Tomorrow Today: Sustainable Design and Construction SPD

## 7.0 **Issues**

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

### 7.1 Principle of the development

7.1.1 The site is located within the designated City Centre. Core Strategy Policy CC1(b) encourages residential development in city centre locations providing that the development does not prejudice the functions of the City Centre and that it provides a reasonable level of amenity for occupiers.

7.1.2 The existing buildings, provide 3 storeys of primarily B1 office space albeit a backpackers' hostel now occupies some of the floorspace in one of the buildings. Core Strategy Policy EC3 seeks to retain office uses unless the development (i) would not result in the loss of a deliverable employment site; or (ii) existing buildings are considered to be non-viable in terms of market attractiveness, business operations, age, condition and or compatibility with adjacent uses; or (iii) the proposal will deliver a mixed use development which continues to provide for a range of local employment opportunities and would not undermine the viability of the remaining employment site.

7.1.3 There has been a significant shift in the focus of new office accommodation towards the west side of the city centre into areas such as Wellington Place to the south of Wellington Street. Although there are cleared sites to the south-west and east of the site it is not located in an area of the city with a shortfall of employment land. Consequently, there remains a considerable amount of committed or newly completed office floorspace nearby within the city centre and consequently the development would accord with Core Strategy policy EC3.

### 7.2 Townscape considerations

7.2.1 The existing buildings resemble 1980's versions of domestic-scale properties in the streets around Park Square to the east. However, their form is unremarkable and

they have limited visual merit. The buildings appear significantly under-scaled when viewed alongside the scale of the Inner Ring Road and surrounding highway infrastructure immediately to the north. As a corollary they appear diminutive in comparison with more recent buildings within the city centre alongside the Inner Ring Road and also buildings such as Castle House to the east. Nearby, planning permission has been granted for buildings up to 28 storeys in height and it is expected that at some time in the future proposals for larger-scale buildings will come forward on the former International Pool site.

7.2.2 At the time of drafting of this report the scale of each of the proposed buildings had not been confirmed and presently it is expected that, when submitted, the application will be submitted in outline. However, it is likely that the buildings would step up in height from Skinner Street to a maximum of 23 storeys alongside Ebor Court in the north-west of the site.

7.2.3 The first phase of the development would be the tallest element, 20 storeys closest to Lisbon Street and stepping up to 23 storeys fronting Westgate. The scale of the building would respond positively to the scale of both the neighbouring highway infrastructure and also taller buildings lining the Inner Ring Road. Further, the site is located in an area of the city centre where the Tall Buildings Design Guide identifies as there being a potential opportunity for a string of tall buildings. Indicative visuals illustrate a slender, well-proportioned building, when viewed from the east.

7.2.4 Whilst the site is not located in a sensitive area from a heritage perspective given its scale the impact on heritage assets further afield, such as the Town Hall need to be carefully tested by verified views.

7.2.5 The proposed maximum height of the building relative to its surroundings is such that the applicant is mindful that wind issues need to be considered in detail in conjunction with the emerging design of the development.

7.2.6 **Do Members consider that the scale of the proposed first phase of development and its relationship with the surrounding context is acceptable?**

### 7.3 Residential amenity, housing mix and affordable housing

7.3.1 The applicant has confirmed that the apartments will meet or surpass the national standards which the Council intends to adopt through the CSSR. Additionally, there are also likely to be additional facilities located elsewhere within the building, such as cycle storage, co-working spaces and a gym, which could also be utilised by residents.

7.3.2 Subject to detailed design, the apartments in the first phase of development are likely to have acceptable levels of daylighting and a reasonable outlook in the context of a city centre environment. Whilst no such details have been provided, there is potential for the rooftops to be used as roof gardens which would both provide amenity space and also accord with sustainable drainage strategies.

7.3.3 The proximity of the building to the Inner Ring Road is such that high levels of noise attenuation are likely to be required to deal with traffic noise. The requirements will be identified and informed through the completion of a noise study and report.

7.3.4 Policy H4 of the Leeds Core Strategy identifies the need to include an appropriate mix of dwelling sizes in the city centre. The applicant has confirmed the intent to provide a mix of one bedroom (47%), two bedroom (51%) and three bedroom (2%)

apartments. The proposed proportion of three bedroom apartments falls well short of the target in the Core Strategy (20%) and is also meaningfully lower than the 5% which has been accepted on recent developments elsewhere in the city centre. Consequently, it is considered that the ratio of 3 bedroom units in the development should increase to take account of local housing need.

7.3.5 Policy H5 of the Leeds Core Strategy identifies the need for affordable housing, presently 5% of the total number of units with 40% of those for households on lower quartile earnings and 60% for households on lower decile earnings. The applicant has confirmed that 5% of the units will be provided as affordable housing.

7.3.6 **Do Members agree that the development should provide a mix of apartments to reflect the local housing needs of the area?**

#### 7.4 Transportation, servicing and public realm

7.4.1 It is intended that vehicular access to the site would be in a similar location to that existing on Lisbon Street. The access would lead to an underground car park beneath the site. The proposal suggests parking space for around 20 to 30 cars. This is below the maximum standard for parking in this area. No visitor parking is required and alternative public off-street space is available nearby. A minimum of 5% of the spaces should be allocated for disabled parking with another 5% to be convertible. Spaces are also required for car club with electric vehicle charging point provision. A justification for the reduced level of car parking provision will be necessary, particularly as on-street controls prevail and where parking is permitted it is well used.

7.4.2 Servicing proposals have not yet been provided albeit it is expected that refuse, servicing and deliveries will be contained within the site to prevent obstruction of local highways.

7.4.3 Existing buildings on the site are set back from the back edge of the footways on both Lisbon Street and Skinner Street providing shallow areas of soft landscaping which are beneficial to the visual amenities of the streetscene. There is no such landscaping on the northern edge creating a far bleaker environment alongside the shared footway / cycleway and the proposed building also projects closer to Lisbon Street than that existing. In common with the more significant hard and soft landscaped areas provided on the west side of Castle House it is considered that opportunities for improving the public realm surrounding the development should accompany the forthcoming planning application.

7.4.4 **Do Members consider that the development should deliver improvements to the public realm around the periphery of the site?**

#### 7.5 Conclusion

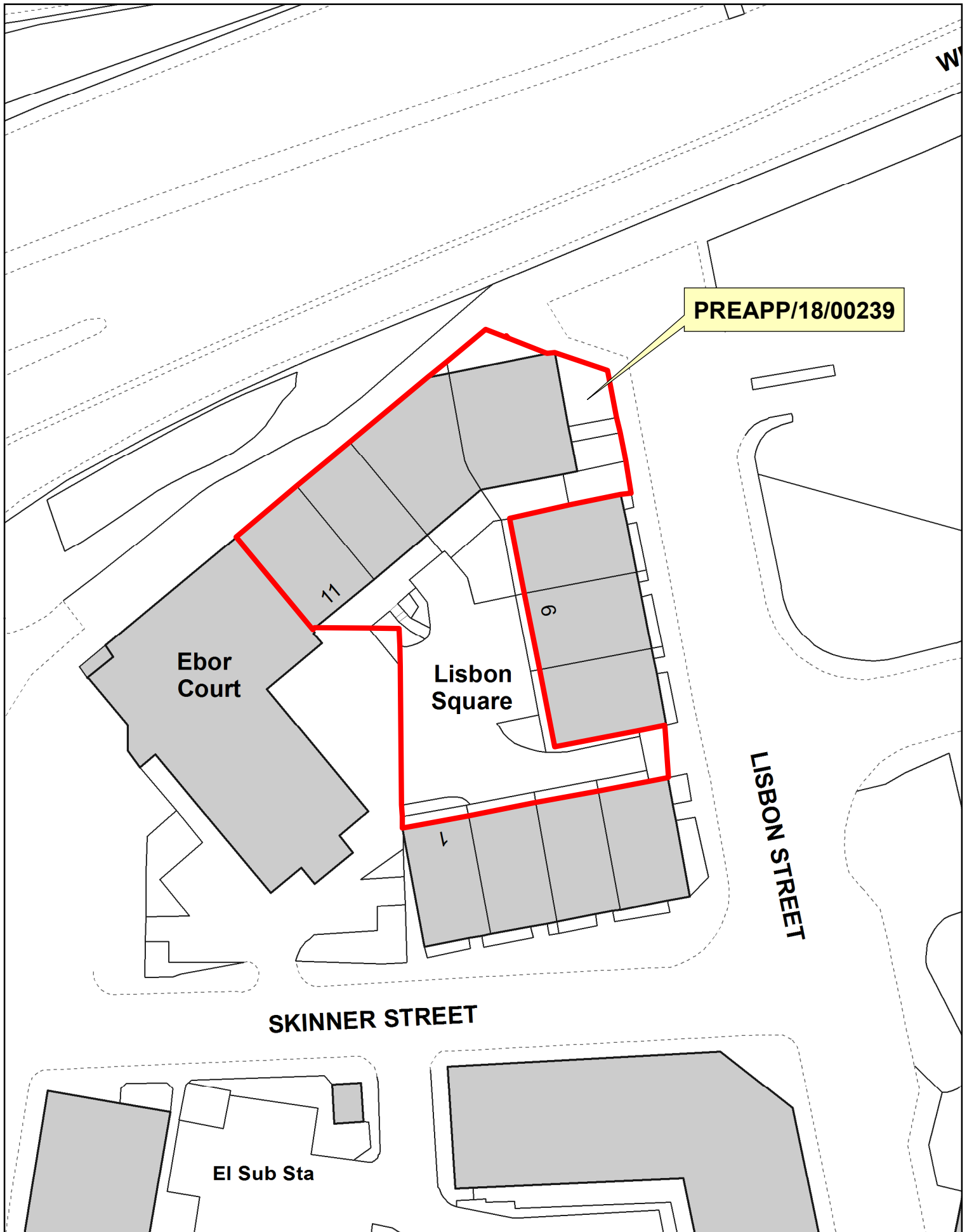
7.5.1 Members are asked to note the contents of the report and the presentation, and are invited to provide feedback, in particular, on the issues outlined below:

**Do Members consider that the scale of the proposed first phase of development and its relationship with the surrounding context is acceptable? (7.2.6)**

**Do Members agree that the development should provide a mix of apartments to reflect the local housing needs of the area? (7.3.6)**



**Do Members consider that the development should deliver improvements to the public realm around the periphery of the site? (7.4.4)**



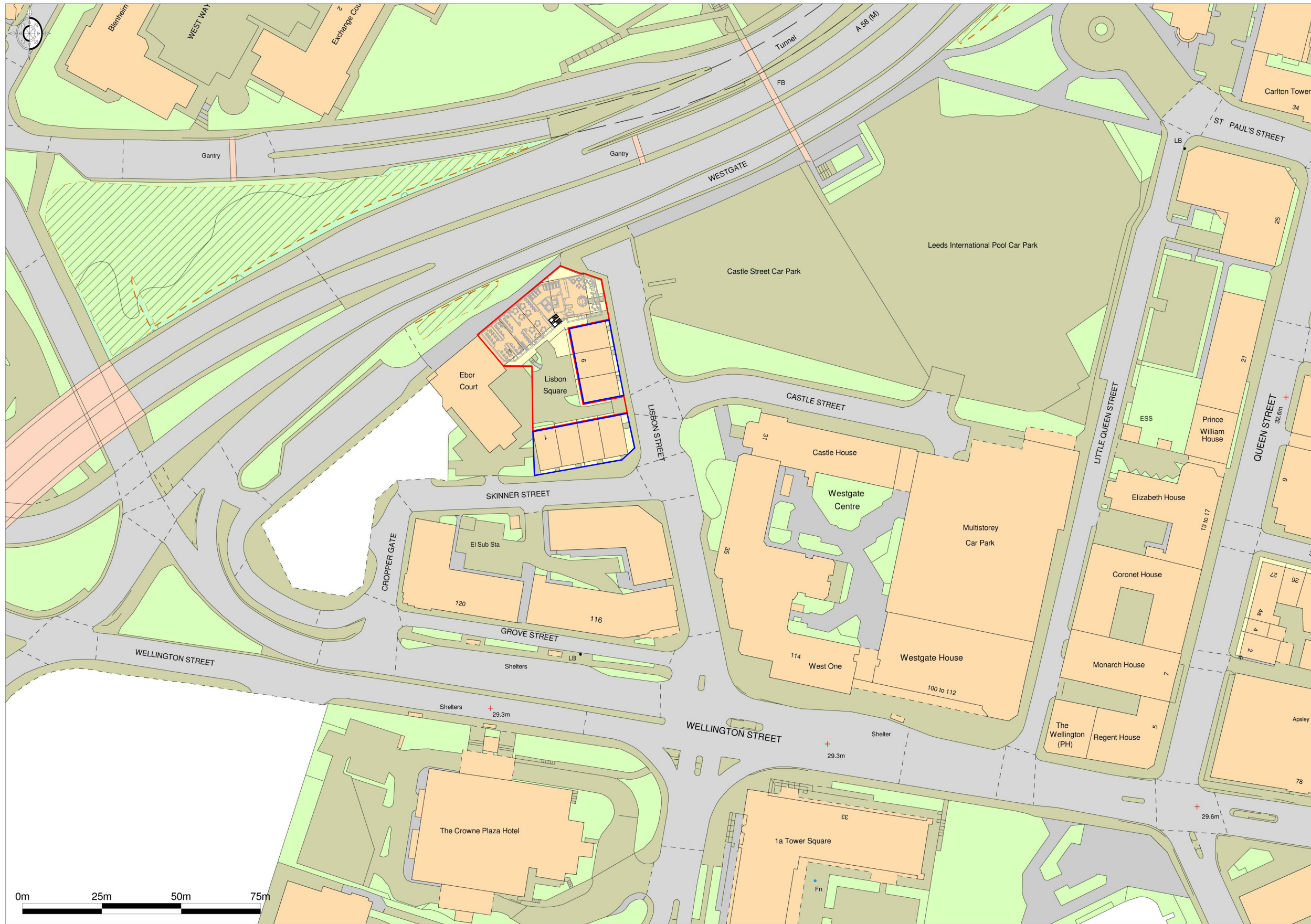
# CITY PLANS PANEL

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

SCALE : 1/500





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**1** Site Location Plan  
1 : 1250@A3

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Rev.	Date	Drawn	Check	Description
A	04.09.18	JCE	JCE	Revised as per planners comments

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**PRELIMINARY ISSUE**

**Project Title:**  
SoCity, Leeds

**Client:**  
SoCity, Leeds

**Drawing Title:**  
Site Location Plan

**File Number:** C007

**Drawn By:** JCE

**Checked By:** JCE

**Scale@A3:** 1 : 1250 **Date:** 19.04.18

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