



Report of the Chief Planning Officer

CITY PLANS PANEL

25th October 2018

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

Applicant – SoCity Leeds Ltd

Electoral Wards Affected:

Little London and Woodhouse

Yes Ward Members consulted

Specific Implications For:

Equality and Diversity

Community Cohesion

Narrowing the Gap

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 It is intended to demolish the existing buildings and to construct two buildings on the site. The tallest building would be located on the northern edge facing Westgate / Inner Ring Road. The western limb of the building would be 24 storeys, dropping down to 21 storeys at the junction with Lisbon Street. The principal entrance to the building would be located at the base of this element of the building, raised several steps above ground level. A ramp would be provided on the southern side of the building to provide a secondary access into the building.
- 3.2 Other than for pedestrian entrances, reception and management areas, the ground floor would be laid out as co-working space, cycle storage, a café and a gym.
- 3.3 Upper floors would be occupied by residential accommodation. 155 apartments are proposed with a mix of one (72), two (80) and three (3) bedroom apartments. The minimum size of the one-bedroom units would be 38m²; the smallest two-bedroom units would be 63m²; and the three-bed apartments would be 90m².
- 3.4 Building 2 would front Lisbon Street and Skinner Street. That element fronting Lisbon Street would be 15 storeys dropping down to 10 storeys fronting Skinner Street. The building would oversail the vehicular access into the site, located in a similar location to that existing. The vehicular access would provide access to a courtyard space comprising 5 parking spaces and cycle storage facilities, and to a ramp down to a basement car park and plant area situated beneath Building 1.
- 3.5 The upper levels of Building 2 would accommodate 92 apartments comprising a mix of one (44), two (44) and three (4) bedroom apartments.
- 3.6 The north-western elevation of Building 1 would be located on the existing building line facing Westgate / Inner Ring Road. The eastern and southern elevations would be set back five metres from the kerb-line to Lisbon Street enabling widened footways and the provision of narrow strips of soft landscaping.

4.0 Relevant planning history

- 4.1 Planning permission was granted on 18th 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).

4.3 Members of City Plans Panel visited the site on 13th September 2018.

5.0 Consultation responses

5.1 LCC Highways – The disabled access is far from ideal and divorced from some of the key entry points. The width of spaces and isle width in the basement are narrow making it difficult to use. It is not clear how some of the cycle storage facilities would be accessed. Further information is required regarding delivery, collection and servicing. Compensation for the loss of a pay and display space on Lisbon Street would be needed. A Transport Assessment and Travel Plan would need to accompany the application.

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 a 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 CO² 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 affordable housing; accessible housing requirements; and housing space standards. 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 Although it is intended to submit an outline application the scale of the proposed buildings has been confirmed, rising from 10 storeys along Skinner Street to 24 storeys alongside Ebor Court in the north-west of the site.
- 7.2.3 The scale of Building 1 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. Its linear form would be complementary to other nearby buildings fronting the Inner Ring Road such as the Nuffield Hospital (Leighton Street) and 3 Park Lane.
- 7.2.4 Building 2 would be situated approximately 7 metres to the south of Building 1 providing an appropriate separation enabling the tower to be read as a separate element and to break down the overall scale of development. At 15 storeys this part of Building 2 would be a similar height to West One offices across Lisbon Street to the south-west.
- 7.2.5 The final segment of Building 2, facing Skinner Street, would be 10 storeys in height significantly taller than the existing buildings on the southern side of the street. However, the revised alignment of the building parallel to, but set back from, Skinner Street helps to accommodate this greater mass.
- 7.2.6 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 and Park Square, need to be examined. The applicant has been requested to provide proposed views for consideration.
- 7.2.7 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.
- 7.2.8 Although the appearance of the building would be a "reserved matter" submitted indicative visuals suggest a regular elevational treatment with a vertical emphasis which would be appropriate to the form of the building and its use.

7.2.9 **Do Members consider that the proposed scale 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 space 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 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. Having taken advice from local agents the applicant indicates that there is very limited demand for three bedroom dwellings in the city centre and therefore intends responding to the demand. Consequently, it is intended to provide a mix of one bedroom (47%), two bedroom (50%) and three bedroom (3%) 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 **What are Members comments on the proposed mix of apartments in the development?**

7.4 Transportation, accessibility 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 a small courtyard and to an underground car park beneath Building 1. The proposal suggests parking space for a total of 17 cars. This is below the maximum standard for parking in this area but policy allows for little or no parking provision subject to there being no adverse impact on the road network. Notwithstanding widespread on-street parking controls nearby this will need to be demonstrated in the application. Two of the parking spaces would be allocated for disabled parking in accordance with policy. No visitor parking is required and alternative public off-street space is available nearby. Spaces are also required for the car club and electric vehicle charging point provision.

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

7.4.3 The finished ground floor level of Building 1 is intended to be raised over a metre above ground level surrounding the site resulting in a series of steps up from Lisbon Street to the main entrance and also from the parking courtyard to a landing outside a side door into the building. Once within the building there would be lift access to all floors. Whereas a ramp is provided to help overcome the change in levels this is not readily accessible from the parking courtyard resulting in a convoluted and indirect route to the building for less mobile people. The ramp would not provide access into the main entrance foyer but into an area at the base of the stair-core to the side of the building. Such a segregated arrangement is not considered to provide reasonable provision for people including wheelchair users contrary to Core Strategy policy T2 and emerging policy in the Core Strategy Selective Review.

7.4.4 **What are Members' comments on the proposed access arrangements into the development?**

7.4.5 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 presently on the northern edge creating a far bleaker environment alongside the shared footway / cycleway. It is proposed to increase the width of the Lisbon Street footway to 3 metres with a narrow strip of soft landscaping retained alongside the building. 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.

7.4.6 **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 proposed scale of development and its relationship with the surrounding context is acceptable? (7.2.9)**
- **What are Members' comments on the proposed mix of apartments in the development? (7.3.6)**
- **What are Members' comments on the proposed access arrangements into the development? (7.4.4)**
- **Do Members consider that the development should deliver improvements to the public realm around the periphery of the site? (7.4.6)**

GENERAL NOTES

WALL THICKNESSES SUBJECT TO DETAILED STRUCTURAL DESIGN.
 ASSUMED FLOOR TO FLOOR = 3000MM.
 LAYOUT SUBJECT TO DETAILED FIRE ENGINEERING DESIGN SOLUTION BY SPECIALIST.
 ALL APARTMENT AREAS COMPLY WITH NATIONAL MINIMUM SPACE STANDARDS. DETAILED LAYOUTS TO BE DEVELOPED.

1 BEDS = 1B1P
 2 BEDS = 2B3P
 3 BEDS = 3B4P

CDM REGULATIONS 2015

BASIC SEPERATION DISTANCES HAVE BEEN DISCUSSED/AGREED WITH CLIENT AND SRUCTURAL ENGINEER IN REGARDS TO ENSURING ADEQUATE SPACE IS ACHIEVED FOR CONSTRUCTION PURPOSES.

THE PROPOSAL IS TO BE SUBMITTED AS AN OUTLINE APPLICATION (WITH APPEARANCE RESERVED) - THEREFORE THE DETAILED DESIGN WILL BE DEVELOPED WITH A SPECIALIST H & S CONSULTANT/CONTRACTOR WHO HAS EXPERIENCE OF SIMILAR PROJECTS (FOLLOWING APPROVAL OF THE OUTLINE APPLICATION). THE DESIGN WILL BE DEVELOPED/AMENDED ACCORDINGLY (IF REQUIRED) TO ENSURE THE PROPOSAL CAN BE SAFELY DESIGNED AND MAINTAINED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE CDM REGULATIONS.



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Rev.	Date	Drawn	Check	Description
B	05.10.18	JCE	JCE	Red line added
A	05.10.18	JCE	JCE	Revised in line with highways consultants comments

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PRELIMINARY ISSUE

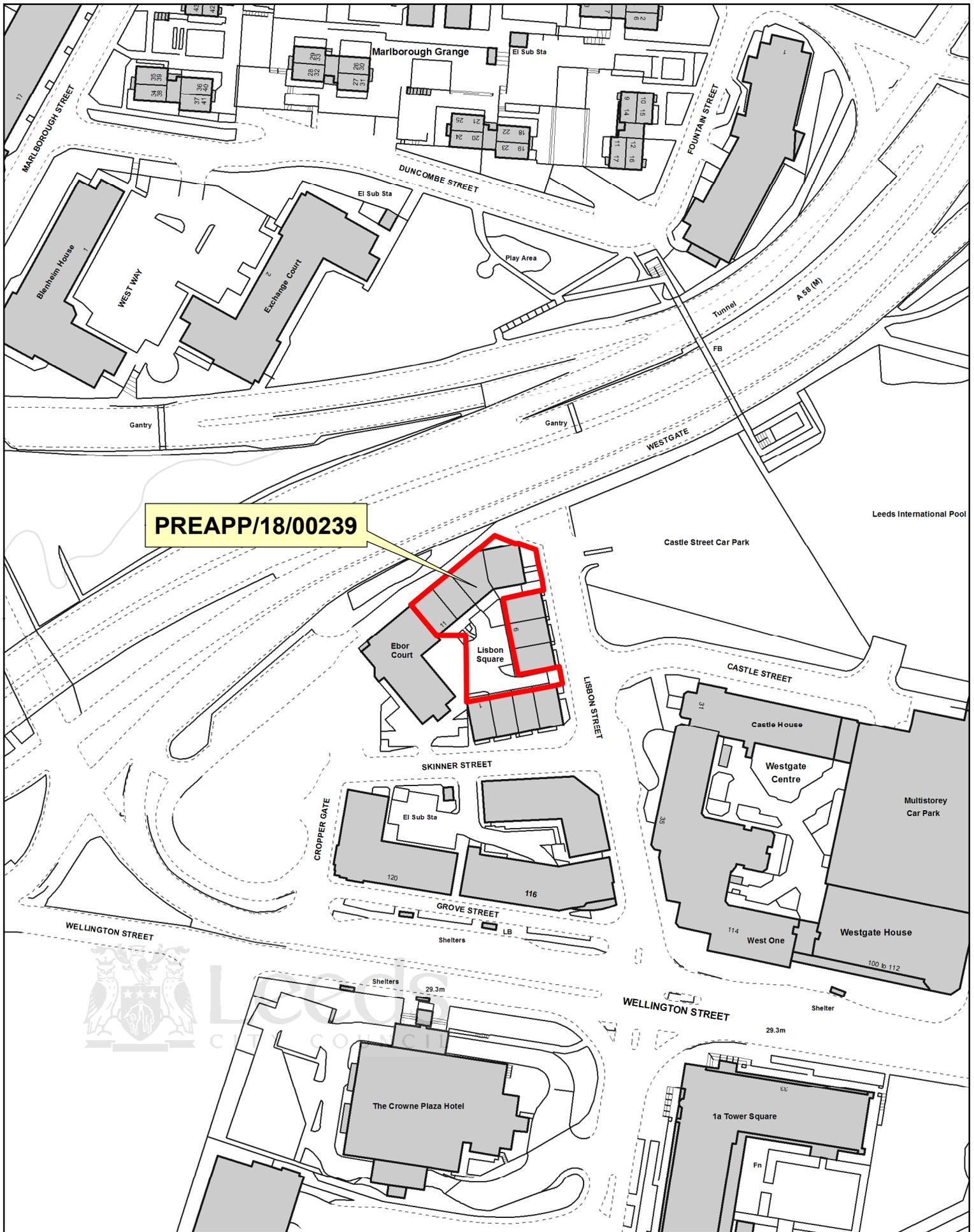
Project Title:
 SoCity, Leeds

Client:
 SoCity, Leeds

Drawing Title:
 Proposed Site Plan

File Number: C007
Drawn By: JCE
Checked By: JCE
Scale@A1: 1 : 200 **Date:** 01.10.18
Dwg No: SK350 **Rev:** B

1. Proposed Site Plan
 1 : 200@A1



PREAPP/18/00239

CITY PLANS PANEL

