



Report of the Chief Planning Officer

NORTH AND EAST PLNS PANEL

Date: 14th March 2019

Subject: 18/07852/OT Outline planning application for the development of a new Engineering and Technology Campus (Use Classes B1/B2/D1), with all matters reserved except for access at Land at Gateway 45 North, Aire Valley Drive, Cross Green, Leeds LS9 0PS.

APPLICANT

University of Leeds

DATE VALID

20th December 2019

TARGET DATE

21st March 2019

Electoral Wards Affected:

Burmantofts and Richmond Hill

Yes

Ward Members consulted
(referred to in report)

Specific Implications For:

Equality and Diversity

Community Cohesion

Narrowing the Gap

RECOMMENDATION: GRANT PERMISSION subject to the specified conditions:

1. Time limit on outline permission (10yrs)
2. Submission of reserved matters (layout, scale, appearance, landscaping)
3. In accordance to approved plans
4. Submission of a construction method statement
5. Details of existing/ proposed ground levels
6. Submission of external walling and roofing materials
7. Submission of details of boundary treatments
8. Details of vehicular access to be submitted
9. Area used by vehicles to be laid out
10. Car park and servicing management plan
11. Submission of revised Travel Plan
12. Details of the electric vehicle charging points
13. Full details of the cycle storage facilities
14. Submission and implementation of landscape details
15. Protection of trees and vegetation
16. Landscape management plan
17. Local employment and training opportunities

18. Details of surface water drainage scheme
19. Surface water from areas used by vehicles to be passed through oil and petrol interceptor
20. Site developed with separate systems of drainage
21. No piped discharge of surface water
22. Submission of contaminated land reports
23. Details of amendments to remediation statement
24. Submission of verification report
25. Testing of any imported soils
26. Sustainability statements (including District Heating)

1.0 INTRODUCTION:

- 1.1 This planning application is brought to Plans Panel North and East in light of the strategic significance of the proposed development as it involves a new campus facility for the University of Leeds in which world-class research and development and the testing of high speed railway infrastructure and vehicles are to be carried out.
- 1.2 The application site will be developed by the University of Leeds, as the 'Leeds Technology Campus' (LETeC). The applicant has provided some background/contextual information to support the application. This is provided in a summarized form here to help the Panel's understanding of the impetus behind the project:
 - It is set out that sitting within the Leeds City Region Enterprise Zone, the site also lies adjacent to the proposed High Speed 2 (HS2) train depot. It is considered that the cluster of rail related development has the potential to act as a catalyst and could yield significant economic benefits to the City Region, enabling collaboration with industry on advanced research and development, prototype and new product testing and development of higher-level skills.
 - Furthermore the applicant has stated that the global railway sector is going through a period of change and substantial growth. Current estimates of the value of the rail market are in the region of £128 billion and a growth of 2.7%. This investment will allow the City Region to tap into this market and create a driver for economic growth. The UK is set to see the greatest investment in the railways since the Victorian era with new projects in the pipeline worth more than £100 billion. The UK's train fleet is forecast to grow by 89% over the next 28 years and between 11-16,000 new electric vehicles are expected to be added to the network. However, the UK currently has no access to research and development (R&D) and test facilities.
 - The lack of suitable R&D and test facilities could cause delays and disruption in getting new rolling stock into service. This project would fill that gap and create a nationally unique, and globally significant facility and act as a catalyst for cluster development in advanced manufacturing within the Leeds City Region Enterprise Zone. The testing facilities that will be housed at LETeC include test bed capability to help address these issues and provide a mechanism for testing new rolling stock without causing delays to the existing network.
- 1.3 The report now progresses to address the broader planning merits of the proposal.

2.0 PROPOSAL:

2.1 This application proposal seeks outline planning permission for a Leeds Engineering and Technology Campus (LETeC). All matters are reserved for future consideration with the exception of access, which is to be achieved off Aire Valley Drive and Aire Valley Road.

2.2 The development proposal seeks to create a new facility for the University of Leeds for research into high speed rail planning and systems and is to include two important components:

Infrastructure Test Facility (ITF) – a full-scale 400 km/h capable high-speed rail infrastructure systems test facility that will be able to test full-scale railway track structures, including embankments, preformed systems and ground stabilisation technologies. This outdoor facility is expected to be adjacent to the Vehicle Test Facility.

Vehicle Test Facility (VTF) – a full-scale high-speed 400 km/h capable vehicle systems test facility capable of testing full-scale rolling stock and their interaction (behaviour) with different track systems. Housed in a building, this facility will in future have the potential to accept rolling stock driven directly from the rail network.

2.3 The LETeC will comprise a range of buildings and structures to accommodate research and testing facilities (B1b, B1c and B2 uses) as well as ancillary offices and teaching spaces (D1 use). The development will also include associated internal access roads, car parking, service yards, rail sidings and landscaping.

2.4 Space to accommodate the facility is not available within the University's current city centre campus and the identified site lies adjacent to the proposed HS2 rolling stock depot, announced by the Government in July 2018. The facility is to provide a centre of excellence for high speed rail planning, design, construction and manufacturing and forms part of the University's Strategic Plan 2015-2020.

3.0 SITE AND SURROUNDINGS:

3.1 The application site lies to the south of the East Leeds Link Road (ELLR) and to the west of Jct 45 of the M1 motorway. The site forms part of a wider development site (Gateway 45, formerly the Temple Green development site) and lies within the Leeds City Region Enterprise Zone.

3.2 The 4 hectare application site is rectangular in shape and was previously used for open cast mining (formerly part of Waterloo Colliery). The site has been cleared and prepared in readiness for future development. The site is generally level although the prevailing ground levels fall gradually to the south, down towards Wyke Beck which runs along the southern boundary of the site.

3.3 The Temple Green Park and Ride facility lies to the west of the site with a recently constructed (temporary) car dealership and fuel filling station under construction on neighbouring development plots. To the north and beyond the ELLR is the Temple Newsam estate.

3.4 The land immediately to the east of the site is vacant and in July 2018 the Government announced that this land is to accommodate the new HS2 rolling stock

depot (Phase 2b Eastern Leg Rolling Stock Depot), where the high speed trains will be maintained, serviced and stored.

4.0 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY:

4.1 The application site forms part of a wider site of 84.7 hectares for which outline planning permission was granted on 24th May 2006 (Ref:21/199/05/OT) to erect warehouse and distribution development with car parking and landscaping. This application gave a 10 year time limit for the submission of outstanding reserved matters but this permission was granted an extension of time in which to implement the permission on 18th June 2014 (Ref: 10/05048/EXT). This, in effect, extended the time for the submission of reserved matters (under this extant outline permission) until 2023.

5.0 HISTORY OF NEGOTIATIONS:

5.1 During the consideration of the application the applicant's Transport consultant has provided additional information clarifying the development proposal and outlining the expected staff and student numbers and how these expected trip rates compare to the extant B8 use permission at the site (Ref:10/05048/EXT).

6.0 PUBLIC/LOCAL RESPONSE:

6.1 The application was advertised by 3 site notices posted adjacent to the site dated 11th January 2019. The application was also advertised in the Yorkshire Evening Post on 11th January 2019.

6.2 No letters of representation have been received following the above public notification process.

7.0 CONSULTATIONS RESPONSES:

7.1 Highways England: No objection.

7.2 Highways: No objection in principle, suggested conditions.

7.3 Flood Risk Management: No objection, conditions recommended.

7.4 Contaminated Land: No objection, suggested conditions.

7.5 SDU (Nature Conservation): No objection, suggested conditions.

7.6 West Yorkshire Police (Architectural Liaison Officer): Advise further consultation prior to submission of detailed proposals.

7.7 SDU (Design): Advise further consultation upon submission of detailed proposals.

7.8 Environmental Studies (Transport Strategy): Consider assessment of likely noise impact at detailed design stage.

7.9 Yorkshire Water: No objection, suggested conditions.

7.10 Travelwise: Request the submission of a revised *travel plan*.

7.11 Environment Agency: Comments awaited although the Environment Agency provided comments at pre-application stage, whereby no objections were raised.

8.0 PLANNING POLICIES:

8.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that applications should be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The Development Plan for Leeds currently comprises the Core Strategy, saved policies within the Leeds Unitary Development Plan (Review 2006) and the Natural Resources and Waste Development Plan Document (2013), the Aire Valley Leeds Area Action Plan (2017) and any made Neighbourhood Plan.

Local Planning Policy

8.2 The Core Strategy sets out the strategic planning policy framework for the district until 2028. The following core strategy policies are relevant:

SP1: Delivery of spatial development strategy.

SP4: Regeneration priority programme areas, including Aire Valley. Priority will be given to developments that improve ... access to employment and skills development, enhance green infrastructure and greenspace, upgrade the local business environment...;

SP5: Aire Valley Leeds identified as a strategic location providing new homes, land for employment uses and new retail services of an appropriate scale.

SP8: A competitive local economy will be supported through provision and safeguarding a supply of land to match employment needs and opportunities for B class uses; seeking to improve accessibility to employment opportunities by public transport, walking and cycling across the district and especially in relation to job opportunities in the Aire Valley Leeds; supporting training/skills and job creation initiatives.

SP9: Provision for offices, industry and warehouse employment land and premises.

EC1: General employment land will be identified, in the first instance, to meet the identified need for land to accommodate research and development, industry, warehousing and waste uses over the plan period.

EC3: Safeguarding existing employment land and industrial areas.

P10: New development for buildings and spaces, and alterations to existing, should ... provide good design that is appropriate to its location, scale and function;

T2: New development should be located in accessible locations that are adequately served by existing or programmed highways, by public transport and with safe and secure access for pedestrians, cyclists and people with impaired mobility.

EN1: Sustainability

EN2: Sustainable construction methods/materials

EN5: Seeks to manage and mitigate flood risk.

G1: Seeks to improve green infrastructure/ corridor function of land; deal positively transition between development and adjoining open land; provision/retention of biodiversity and wildlife.

- 8.3 The application site is designated for employment and lies within an area identified for regeneration initiatives and the following saved UDP policies are considered to be relevant:
- GP5: Seeks to ensure that development proposals resolve detailed planning considerations, including amenity.
 - N23: Incidental space around built development should provide a visually attractive setting
 - N25: Seeks boundaries of sites to be designed in a positive manner using walls, hedges or railings where appropriate to the character of the area.
 - BD5: Seeks to ensure new development protects amenity.
 - LD1: Seeks for landscape schemes to complement and where possible enhance the quality of the existing environment.
- 8.4 The following Natural Resources and Waste DPD policies are considered to be relevant:
- WATER7: All developments are required to ensure no increase in the rate of surface water run-off to the existing formal drainage system and development expected to incorporate sustainable drainage techniques.
 - LAND1: Supports principle of development on previously developed land and requires submission of information regarding the status of the site in term of contamination.
 - AIR1: Relates to air quality considerations
- 8.5 The application site lies within an identified employment site (AV91) and an Enterprise Zone within the Aire Valley Area Action Plan. The following policies are considered to be of relevance:
- AVL4: General employment development in Aire Valley Leeds.
 - AVL5: Local job opportunities.
 - AVL12: Strategic Transport Infrastructure Improvements in AVL.
 - AVL13: Green Infrastructure Network.
- 8.6 In April 2012, the Leeds City Region established an Enterprise Zone in the Aire Valley. National government introduced the concept of Enterprise Zones to *“stimulate private sector investment and drive economic growth, backed by incentives which include reduced business rates and simplified planning regulations. A key requirement is that the areas designated as enterprise zones should be made up of ‘clean sites’, available for immediate development and with few or no business occupants”*.
- 8.7 The associated Enterprise Zone website states that *‘All four sites within the enterprise zone – Newmarket Lane (9.2 ha), Thornes Farm (21.08 ha), Logic Leeds (49.1 ha) and Temple Green (63.04 ha) – have planning consents already in place for a range of employment uses including large-scale manufacturing, distribution and high quality offices.’* The website further states that *‘Leeds was chosen as the location for the enterprise zone as it demonstrated the potential to deliver significant economic growth and access to job opportunities across a wide geographic area. The enterprise zone is expected to act as a catalyst for the regeneration of the wider Aire Valley Leeds which, fully developed, could deliver £550 million of additional economic output and over 9,500 new jobs by 2025. An additional benefit is that the local enterprise partnership will be able to retain business rates generated within the enterprise zone to fuel economic development projects and growth elsewhere in the city region.’*

Supplementary Planning Guidance

- 8.8 The following documents are considered to be relevant:
SPG22 Sustainable Urban Drainage (adopted)
SPD Street Design Guide (adopted)
SPD Sustainable Design and Construction (adopted)
Leeds Parking Policy (adopted)
SPD Travel Plans (adopted)

National Planning Policy

- 8.9 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2019) sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. It provides a framework within which locally-prepared plans for housing and other development can be produced.
- 8.10 Planning law requires that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The NPPF must be taken into account in the preparation of local and neighbourhood plans and is a material consideration in planning decisions. 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. It is considered that the local planning policies mentioned above are consistent with the wider aims of the NPPF.
- 8.11 The NPPF gives a presumption in favour of sustainable development (para. 11).
- 8.12 Chapter 6 deals with building a strong, competitive economy and advises that planning policies and decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. Significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development (para.80).
- 8.13 Chapter 9 covers the promotion of sustainable transport modes and achieving safe and suitable access to sites for all users (para.108) and to refuse developments on highway grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe (para.109).
- 8.14 Chapter 12 identifies that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development creation of high quality buildings and places is fundamental to sustainable development (para.124).
- 8.15 Chapter 14 requires account be given to flood risk and that when determining planning applications, local planning authorities should ensure that flood risk is not increased elsewhere (para.163).
- 8.16 Chapter 15 states that planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment (para.170) and ensuring that a site is suitable for its proposed use taking account of ground condition and any risk arising from land instability and contamination (para.178).

Emerging Policy - Core Strategy Selective Review (CSSR)

8.17 Hearing sessions relating to this limited review of the Core Strategy were completed at the end of February/beginning of March 2019 and the Inspector's main modifications are expected later this month. The advanced nature of this review is such that some weight can be attached to the revised policies where relevant:

- EN1 – Carbon Dioxide reduction
- EN2 – Sustainable Design and Construction
- EN4 – District Heating
- EN8 – Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure

9.0 MAIN ISSUES

1. Principle of development
2. Highway implications
3. Impact on general amenity
4. Flood risk and drainage
5. Impact on visual amenity (design and appearance)
6. Other matters

10.0 APPRAISAL

Principle of development:

- 10.1 The application site is allocated for employment purposes within the development plan and benefits from a wider outline planning permission for up to 275,000sqm of B8 use class floorspace (warehouse and distribution- Ref:10/05048/EXT). Policy AVL4 of the Aire Valley Area Action Plan states that new development for research and development (use class B1b), light industry (use class B1c), general industry (use class B2) and storage and distribution (use class B8) uses will be promoted and concentrated in a stipulated number of locations, including the Leeds City Region Enterprise Zone, to which this site lies within.
- 10.2 The proposed development will create a new globally significant research facility for high speed rail systems and comprise buildings/ structures and activities that relate to B1b, B1c and B2 uses with the supporting office and teaching spaces (D1 use) forming an ancillary element to the overall campus. Accordingly, the proposed development is considered to be consistent with the development plan allocation.
- 10.3 Following the Government's announcement that the adjacent site has been identified for the HS2 rolling stock depot there are clear links with the research work undertaken within this proposed facility. The facility is expected to provide infrastructure and vehicle testing facilities, together with the ability to assess rail systems integration, in a way which will be globally significant and will give Leeds and Leeds City Region a significant competitive advantage in attracting investment in the rail and infrastructure sector. The applicant is seeking a 10 year timeframe in which to submit subsequent reserved matters to provide the University with flexibility to the build-out of the site. Recognising the likely need to secure grant funding for each of the specialised testing facilities and that the timeframes are reflective of the adjacent HS2 programme, which the scheme has clear links with, it is considered that such an approach can be accepted in this instance.
- 10.4 The application site also adjoins identified Green Infrastructure corridors that extend along the northern (adj. ELLR) and southern boundaries (Wyke Beck) of the site. This outline application seeks permission for access only but it would be expected

that the development is provided with a commensurate level of landscaping to provide an appropriate setting and biodiversity benefits that appropriately respond to these identified green infrastructure corridors. The detailed layout would be subject to further assessment through a subsequent reserved matters application.

Highways implications:

- 10.5 The proposed LETeC is to connect to the existing adopted highways of Aire Valley Drive and Aire Valley Road and the Council's Highways officer considers this to be acceptable in principle, subject to a continuation of the existing adopted carriageway/ pavement widths in to the site.
- 10.6 The identified site lies within a wider development site that has extant permission for up to 275,000sqm of B8 use floorspace (warehouse and distribution) where site accessibility was considered and accepted. Based on the additional information supplied by the applicant's highway consultant the vehicle trips associated with the proposed development as compared to the extant permission (relative to this site) would be reduced and the proposal would have a negligible impact on the surrounding highway network.
- 10.7 The LETeC is to function as a light industrial site rather than exhibiting campus characteristics attributable to a university or college. The facility would accommodate a managed number of students that witness scheduled testing activities and then leave the site. There would not be the same opportunities for students to study on-site akin to a traditional university/ college campus.
- 10.8 The facility provides no student parking on site as they will be encouraged to use alternative modes of transport through the implementation of travel plan measures. These measures will be delivered by amendments to and linkage with the University's existing travel plan and this can be secured by planning condition. Additionally, the recently opened Temple Green Park and Ride facility is adjacent and has greatly enhanced the sustainable travel options of the site and provides a 10/15min frequency bus service to and from the city centre. As such this is likely to be an attractive option for staff and students traveling out to the site from the city centre. To ensure there is no mis-use of the park and ride car park by students or staff (a TRO is operational at the park and ride) a detailed car park management plan is to be secured by planning condition.
- 10.9 Notwithstanding the above, the proposal is also to make provision for cycle and motorcycle parking, conventional and accessible parking bays as well as the electric vehicle charging points. Final details and provision will be secured through subsequent reserved matters application(s).
- 10.10 Overall, it is considered that the proposal will not adversely impact on the operation of the highway or road safety.

Impact on general amenity:

- 10.11 The application site lies close to the M1 Motorway and a main arterial road (ELLR) in a location that is predominantly in commercial/ industrial use and situated well away from residential properties. In this context, the site is not considered to be in a sensitive location and the activities associated with the proposed development are not anticipated to give rise to wider amenity concerns. The proximity and road noise levels of the nearby motorway and main road could lead to poor internal noise

climate within any teaching areas of this proposal but ultimately this is a matter for assessment upon the submission of subsequent reserved matters application.

- 10.12 The application site lies within the Council's identified area of air quality concern but given the nature of the proposed use, the separation distance to roads/ motorway, the extant employment permission and also taking account of the prevailing wind direction this matter is not considered to require further assessment or mitigation. The relatively low level of parking and provision of electric vehicle charging points will also help reduce the development's own impact on air quality.

Flood risk and drainage:

- 10.13 The application site lies within flood Zone 1 and there is no record of flooding at the site or in locations immediately surrounding.
- 10.14 The Wyke Beck watercourse does however run along the southern boundary of the site (Flood Zone 2) and therefore has the potential to flood. This watercourse continues in a culvert beneath the M1 motorway carriageway approximately 125m downstream of this site. The Environment Agency comments are awaited but typically advise that a sequential approach be applied to the development layout, taking account of comparative flood levels, site topography and appropriate mitigation strategies. Development in or near areas of flood risk would typically require finished floor levels to be raised above the 1 in 100 annual probability event flood level (incl. allowances for climate change) with an additional 300mm freeboard and that regard is given to the use of flood resilience measures. Given the level differences that exist, officers are confident these matters can be appropriately dealt with by planning condition.
- 10.15 The accompanying drainage strategy indicates that foul water is to be disposed of through ground piped drainage network and connect to the existing foul water drainage infrastructure with surface water proposed to discharge at a restricted rate to Wyke Beck. Attenuation of surface water is proposed through the installation of underground storage and a swale to the western boundary. The Council's Flood Risk Management officer and Yorkshire Water raise no objection to these arrangements, subject to conditions and accordingly all drainage and flooding related issues can be fully addressed at the reserved matters stage.

Impact on visual amenity (design and appearance):

- 10.16 The detailed site layout and appearance of the proposed buildings/ structures associated with the LETeC will be subject for future consideration through subsequent reserved matters whereby opportunities to achieve high quality buildings and surrounding landscaping to the visually prominent frontages can be detailed. Notwithstanding this, the site's general positioning within the Enterprise Zone is such that it is not considered to be visually sensitive.

Other matters:

- 10.17 The Wyke Beck is considered to be an important Green Infrastructure corridor and runs along the southern boundary. It will be expected that the development is suitably set back from this feature and that the mature hedgerow that runs along the top of the north bank of the beck is retained. The detailed site layout of the LETeC will be subject to future consideration through subsequent reserved matters where retention of these features can be secured. The Council's Nature Conservation

officer raises no objection to the proposal subject to securing a construction environment management plan and bio-diversity and enhancement management plan to protect existing biodiversity features during construction phase and to ensure the long-term protection and enhancement of biodiversity. These can be adequately dealt with by planning conditions.

- 10.18 In respect of land contamination matters, the submitted phase 1 desk study report accompanying the application recommends a phase 2 site investigation is carried out and the Council's Contaminated Land officer is content for this additional work to be secured through an appropriately worded planning condition.
- 10.19 Taking account of the scale of development and the site's location within Leeds City Region Enterprise Zone it is considered important to reinforce the developer's commitment in creating local employment opportunities with measures to provide for training and employment for local people (in co-operation with Employment Leeds) for a range of posts (incl. construction process). Such arrangements could be appropriately dealt with by planning condition.
- 10.20 For Members information only the development proposal would not be applicable for CIL charging as it satisfies an exemption covering '*development by predominantly publicly funded or not for profit organisation, including...education*'.

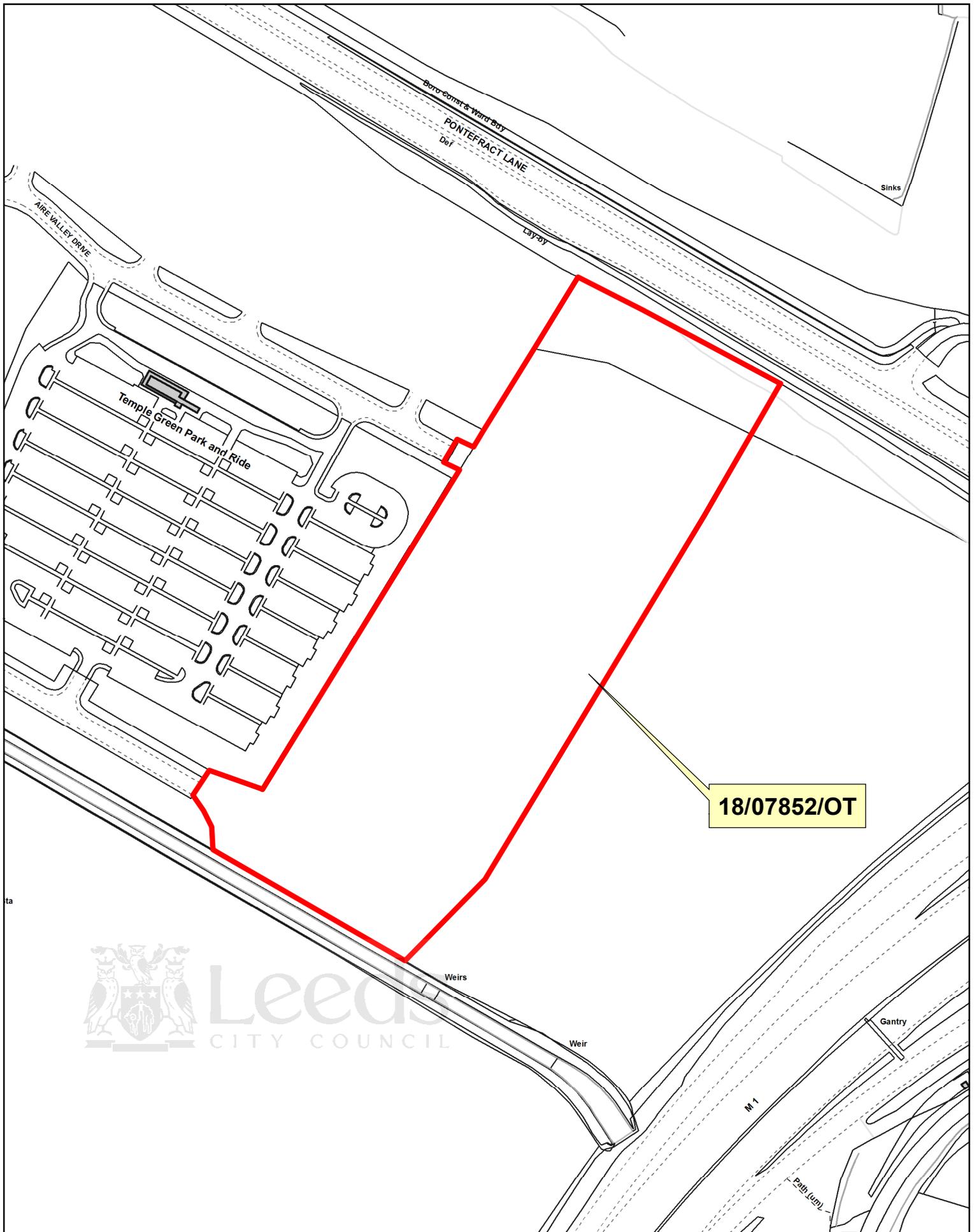
11.0 CONCLUSION

- 11.1 The proposed LETeC campus is considered consistent with the site's employment allocation within the development plan and would enable the University of Leeds to deliver a nationally unique and globally significant research and testing facility for high speed rail systems.
- 11.2 This application seeks outline permission with all matters reserved for later approval, except for access. The proposal is to connect to the existing adopted highway and is not considered to adversely impact on the surrounding highway network or be prejudicial to highway safety. The site layout and design of the campus buildings are subject to further approval whereby opportunities to achieve high quality buildings and respect and supplement landscaping features can be detailed. Accordingly, this proposal is recommended for approval and in the absence of any conflict with adopted policies should be supported without delay in accordance with the NPPF.

Background Papers:

Application and history files.

Certificate of Ownership- the appointed planning agent, on behalf of the applicant, certifies that they gave requisite notice to the landowner (Aire Valley Land LLP) on 12th December 2018.



18/07852/OT



NORTH AND EAST PLANS PANEL

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

SCALE : 1/2500

