

## **CITY PLANS PANEL**

**THURSDAY, 6TH JUNE, 2019**

**PRESENT:** Councillor J McKenna in the Chair

Councillors D Blackburn, C Campbell,  
P Carlill, D Cohen, A Garthwaite, E Nash,  
P Wadsworth and N Walshaw

A Members site visit was held in connection with the following applications:  
Application Nos: 18/07367/FU, 19/01277/LI, 19/01279/LI & 19/01280/LI –  
Leeds Flood Alleviation Scheme – Phase 2. PREAPP/19/00037 – Commerce  
House, Wade Lane, Leeds and was attended by the following Councillors: J  
McKenna, D Blackburn, C Campbell, P Carlill, E Nash, P Wadsworth, S  
Hamilton and R Grahame.

### **1 Appeals Against Refusal of Inspection of Documents**

There were no appeals against the refusal of inspection of documents.

### **2 Exempt Information - Possible Exclusion of Press and Public**

There were no items identified where it was considered necessary to exclude  
the press or public from the meeting due to the confidential nature of the  
business to be considered.

### **3 Late Items**

There were no late items of business identified.

### **4 Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests**

Although there were no declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests made  
at the meeting, Councillor R Stephenson required it to be recorded that a  
family member had submitted a tender for works associated with the  
construction of the Leeds Flood Alleviation Scheme (Phase 2) – Agenda Item  
No. 8 (Minute No. 8 referred).

### **5 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors C Gruen, P Gruen, A  
Khan and G Latty.

Councillors: R Grahame, S Hamilton, J Heselwood and R Stephenson were in  
attendance as substitute Members.

### **6 Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

The Minutes of the previous meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> May 2019 were submitted for comment/ approval.

Councillor J Heselwood requested a minor alteration to Minute No. 172, substituting the word “manned” and replacing with “staffed”.

## **7 Matters Arising from the Minutes**

Councillor R Grahame said there were a number of references within the minutes to the provision of “green walls”. Could an explanation be provided as to what a green wall was?

In offering an explanation Councillor N Walshaw said living walls or green walls were vertical gardens that are attached to the exterior or interior of a building with an irrigation system.

The Chair thanked Councillor Walshaw for his explanation.

## **8 APPLICATION NO. 18/07367/FU - CONSTRUCTION OF PHASE 2 OF THE LEEDS FLOOD ALLEVIATION SCHEME (FAS) TO LAND ADJACENT TO AND WITHIN THE RIVER AIRE CORRIDOR BETWEEN LEEDS CITY CENTRE (WHITEHALL WATERFRONT) AND CALVERLEY**

The Chief Planning Officer submitted a report which set out details of an application for the construction of phase 2 of the Leeds Flood Alleviation Scheme (FAS) to land adjacent to, and within the River Aire corridor between Leeds City Centre (Whitehall Waterfront) and Calverley, Leeds.

Members visited the site prior to the meeting. Site photographs and plans were displayed and referred to throughout the discussion of the application.

The Planning Officer confirmed and clarified the following by verbal updates to the Panel report issued:

Page 34 – 10.10 – embankments would be up to a max. height of 4000mm (not 400mm as mentioned).

Page 37 – 10.29 - Zone 12 – the wall shown either side of the Locomotive sheds at Armley Mills would be 2.3m high (not max.1.8m as suggested)

The Planning Case Officer reported that further representations had been received following publication of the report to Panel:

- Yorkshire Wildlife Trust had confirmed no objections to the proposal.
- Environment Agency, raised no objections subject to conditions, the full detail of these are expected by 12<sup>th</sup> June 2019.
- Councillor A Carter (Calverley & Farsley Ward) had commented there was a strong case for effective action following storm Eva in 2015 and was broadly supportive of the proposals.

- The Home Office confirmed that they were supportive of the proposals, particularly given the history of flooding in the area and the impact on their offices at Waterside Court.
- 2 sets of residents from Newlay Bridge had requested their 'objections' be changed to 'comments' following the revised drawing at this location and additional clarifications from the Project Team
- Horsforth Town Council were neither supporting or objecting to the proposals (neutral response)
- Kirkstall Ward Members Veener and Bithell expressed their support for the scheme and look forward to working with Officers and local residents on the detail of the scheme as it develops. Specifically they wished to mention that protection of natural habitats and the nurturing of the various species that thrive in the valley are of particular concern to our constituents and we look forward to discussions with them and the ecologists working on the scheme in order to ensure that local wildlife are protected as much as possible in the development and building of the flood defences.
- Councillor J Illingworth (Kirkstall) confirmed that he would not now be attending to speak and address Panel, but was content for the application to proceed and welcomed more details about the scheme as the work progresses. In addition, Councillor Illingworth requested (1) experience from this proposal be used to inform an improved approach to consultation on large-scale planning applications in the future (2) that as part of the proposals consideration be given to mitigation measures being relocated to wider areas

Planning Officers addressed the Panel, speaking in detail about the proposal and highlighted the following:

Construction of Phase 2 of the Leeds Flood Alleviation Scheme (FAS) including flood storage areas, flow control structure (including plant and machinery) and defence to include; walls, sheet piling, earth bunds, scour protection and associated access, landscaping, demolition, building and construction works.

Listed Building Consent was also sought in respect of the following:

Application No. 19/01277/LI – Construction of a 200mm thick reinforced concrete flood defence wall clad in stone into Wellington Bridge

Application No. 19/01278/LI – Construction of a 200mm thick reinforced concrete flood defence wall clad in stone into Newlay Bridge

Application No. 19/01279/LI – Installation of a control structure tying into Clough House using suitable lime hydraulic mortar and remedial works to Clough House (Kirkstall)

Application No. 19/10280/LI – Construction of flood walls connecting to the Engine Shed on the NW and SE elevations and remedial works to the Engine Shed, comprising the insertion of a floor to ceiling flood defence wall,

replacement flood defence door and inserted secondary flood defence glazing (at Armley Mills)

In addition, Planning Officers outlined the engagement and consultation that has been undertaken with the public and Ward Members in anticipation of the proposal coming before Panel.

Members raised the following questions:

- Could more details be provided about the proposed works to the Engine Shed
- Referring to paragraph 6.22 and the Council's declaration of a climate emergency, Members queried if the materials to be used on the scheme could be appropriate to meet the Council's ambitions – particularly in order to aid reduction of carbon emissions
- Was any consideration given to using the goits to produce hydro-electricity
- Was a suitable species of tree being used to slow the flow of water
- Were the proposed works to be phased suitably so as to avoid increasing flood risk up-stream during construction
- When would work on the scheme commence
- Would completion of the scheme assist businesses in obtaining flood protection insurance cover

In responding to the issues raised, Council Officers said:

- Officers reported that a secondary wall and glazing (floor to ceiling) would be inserted behind the existing wall, with the secondary wall intended to take the necessary weight but with the glazing being such as to enable water to pass through if required. Once complete the building would be secure and dry.
- Engines within the Engine Shed will be removed and stored within Armley Mills during construction – with discussions already having been undertaken with Leeds Museums & Galleries in relation to the logistics required for this.
- Members were informed that the scheme involves a number of elements which will contribute towards the Council's climate change priorities. The overall intention is to follow natural flood management methods including the planting of up to two million trees (to delay run off). In addition, there will be a reduction in the use of carbon-intensive bricks, steel & concrete; the greater use of modified wood and other plant-based derivatives; use of hybrid excavators; material reuse up to an estimated 90%; and use of materials from local suppliers as far as possible to reduce transportation requirements.
- Natural flood management methods being used as far as possible will slow down the overall rate of water flow, meaning that actual built and more invasive flood management elements that comprise the scheme are reduced in number.

- Members were informed that due consideration had been given to the use of goits to produce hydro-electricity but it was determined to not be commercially viable for this scheme. Hydro-electricity production is therefore not incorporated as a distinct element of Phase 2, but opportunities for this in the future are not being unduly limited.
- Professor Sir John Lawton, speaking on behalf of the Council, said the scheme before Members was the most ambitious natural flood management scheme in the UK. He said once the trees were established, the tree canopy would create a large surface area and would be effective in slowing the watercourse down. Further, established tree roots (both in summer and winter) would assist in taking on excess water and so help to prevent over-topping of the watercourse.
- It was reported that phasing of the works was the subject of further discussions with the contractors and will form a condition to the permission, as it is important not to increase flood risks elsewhere as a consequence of any works. In addition, Environment Agency permitting and the following of Environment Agency guidelines by the contractors will introduce an inevitable element of phasing to the work-scheme.
- It was understood that some business in the Kirkstall area struggled in obtaining flood protection insurance. The completion of Phase 1 would provide some reassurance to insurance companies as it provides a 1:100 flood protection. The completion of Phase 2 would in turn further enhance that reassurance. The Chief Planning Officer said that all new business development in the area should be compliant with current standards around flood risk, such that the obtaining of appropriate insurance going forward is easier and new developments can obtain suitable protection.

In offering comments Members raised the following issues:

- Members were supportive of the scheme commenting that it was a comprehensive, ambitious plan, impressive in design and sits well within the landscape.
- Members noted that the scheme will be much welcomed and provide considerable relief for residents, businesses and other occupiers in the area in view of the history of flooding in the area.
- Members were of the view that the river needs to be usable and attractive.
- Could the two goits at: Armley Mills and St Anne's Mills be inspected with a view to maintenance/ repair, the flow appears to be restricted.
- Could the use of water power at Armley Mills be investigated further

In responding to the latter point the Chair suggested that it may be an appropriate subject to be considered by the new Climate Change Advisory Committee.

In summing up the Chair thanked all parties for their attendance and contributions, he suggested that the Members appeared to be unanimously supportive of the application.

**RESOLVED –**

- (i) That Application No. 18/07367/FU be deferred and delegated to the Chief Planning Officer for approval subject to the conditions specified in the Appendix No.1 of the submitted report (and any others which he might consider appropriate).
- (ii) That Application Nos; 19/01277/LI, 19/01278/LI, 19/01279/LI and 19/01280/LI be deferred and delegated to the Chief Planning Officer for approval subject to the conditions specified in the Appendix No. 2 of the submitted report (and any others which he might consider appropriate).

**9 PREAPP/19/00037 - Pre-application presentation of proposed Student Residential Accommodation development on the site of Commerce House, Wade Lane and St Alban's Place, Leeds LS2 8NJ**

The Chief Planning Officer submitted a report which set out details of a pre-application proposal for Student Residential Accommodation development on the site of Commerce House, Wade Lane and St Albans Place, Leeds, LS2 8NJ.

Members visited the site prior to the meeting. Site photographs and plans were displayed and referred to throughout the discussion of the application.

The applicant's representatives addressed the Panel, speaking in detail about the proposal and highlighted the following:

- Site / location/ context
- Demolition of the existing office building and the construction of a multi-storey student residential accommodation development
- Located within the tall building cluster
- Key views
- The proposed new development would comprise a stepped block, rising from 18 storey's to 28 storey's in height
- The building would contain 362 studio flats designed for students
- Bicycle/ bin stores and gym located at lower ground floor level
- Main entrance located at ground floor level together with cinema room, general amenity space
- Additional communal space, including study rooms would be located at first floor level
- The studio flats would comprise 21m<sup>2</sup> of floorspace
- Large floor to ceiling windows
- Public realm/ courtyard area/ enhanced pedestrian facilities along Belgrave Street

- Agreed new pedestrian access from St Albans Place
- Turning head for deliveries, pick up and drop off area
- Landscaping and tree planting (28 new trees)
- The developers are aware that a wind assessment requires undertaking

Members raised the following questions:

- The proposal is for studio flats but isn't there a move away from this type of accommodation following concerns about student isolation
- Could the courtyard space be publicly accessible
- Concerns about the lack of connectivity between the development, surrounding buildings, and the wider city centre
- The size of the studio flats at 21m<sup>2</sup> was a concern

In responding to the issues raised, the applicant's representatives said:

- The Architect suggested there was a need for a mix of student accommodation across the area. In terms of student isolation, the developers were aware of such concerns and intended to provide communal facilities and social events to address these issues.
- Members were informed that there was a proposal to locate some of the studio flats at ground floor level which had safety concerns for residents if the courtyard space was not managed privately and open to public access. Member's attention was also drawn to the comments by West Yorkshire Police (Paragraph 5.9 of the submitted report) which suggested reducing the number of access routes into the site, the provision of gates, access control measures for authorised entry and visitor access being directed through the main reception.
- It was suggested that students would not be unduly isolated from the wider community, as they will be able to access the public space at St Albans Place.
- In addition, Members were told that opportunities for students to mix and interact would be enhanced if they could feel that there were safe and private communal spaces in which they could do so.
- It was suggested that the provision of a private courtyard area is a reflection of the usual hierarchy of space which one expects to see in any city environment.
- Members were informed that National Described Space Standards (NDSS) did not readily apply to purpose built student housing. The Council's policies however require quality of the residential amenities to be provided to be taken into account in consideration of the proposals.
- It was suggested that reasonable standards of general amenity space for occupiers had been met with an area of 638m<sup>2</sup> of communal space being provided. Members were also made aware that other similar schemes had been approved in the area. The City Centre Team Leader reminded Members that connectivity remains important within any city but is particularly important within Leeds, with its character of finer grain pedestrian routes which allow the public to move freely and

have a choice of routes. This can be balanced alongside the comments raised by West Yorkshire Police regarding crime and safety concerns, but with an understanding that public free-flow access and building design (e.g. large windows and a reception overlooking public courtyard areas) can also act as a form of natural surveillance to address safety and amenity concerns.

- The Architect outlined for Members how the design of the development had evolved, with the context of the area having been the starting point (particularly in terms of the height of the structures proposed and façade treatment). Further, natural light is seen as an important part of the development and hence the inclusion of tall windows within the studios.

In offering comments Members raised the following issues:

- The majority of Members welcomed the modern design of the building.
- A number of Members expressed concern about the size of the studio flats suggesting they were too small and without the mitigation of more substantial amenity space in close proximity as one would find with cluster-flats.
- Some Members were of the view that a policy was required which specified the minimum space requirements for student accommodation.
- There was concern from Members about “pure” student accommodation suggesting there was a need for more mixed residential accommodation and to remain mindful of the need for a mixed economy within the city centre.
- Mixed views were expressed as to whether the courtyard space should be publicly accessible, some Members were of the view that routes through the development should be retained, while others welcomed the private space and the management of that space.
- Could consideration be given to inclusion of trees in the landscaped areas to assist in reducing flood-risk and deal with surface water run-off.
- Could some rooftop communal space be considered
- Could carbon reduction measures be considered, such as renewable energy sources and use of sustainable materials in construction.

The Chief Planning Officer drew Members attention to the fact that there does remain mixed provision in this area, with a variety of office, residential, student and retail developments. The three blocks immediately neighbouring the development site for instance are not solely student accommodation.

In drawing the discussion to a conclusion Members provided the following feedback;

- Members were generally of the view that the proposed use of the site for student accommodation was acceptable in principal.

- Further details were required as to whether the living conditions within the student accommodation were acceptable.
- Members were of the view that the proposed mass and form of the development and its relationship with the surrounding context was acceptable, provided the developer remains faithful to the design proposed at this pre-application stage.
- Further information was required from the developer as to whether the courtyard space should be publicly accessible and / or how this might be ingeniously designed to maintain connectivity with the wider city centre area and surrounding locations.
- Members were of the opinion that the development should deliver improvements to the pedestrian environment in the area beyond the immediate periphery of the site

The Chair thanked the developers for their attendance and presentation suggesting that Members appeared to be generally supportive of the scheme. Commenting on the public access issue he said a clever / imaginative design of the building may address some of the access concerns.

#### **RESOLVED –**

- (i) To note the details contained in the pre-application presentation
- (ii) That the developers be thanked for their attendance and presentation

#### **10 Application 18/05017/FU - Removal of Condition 50 (MLLR Delivery) of Approval 16/07938/OT, on land between Barrowby Lane and Manston Lane, Thorpe Park, Leeds.**

The Chief Planning Officer submitted a report which provided an update in respect of an application for the removal of Condition 50 (MLLR delivery) of approval 16/07938/OT on land between Barrowby Lane and Manston Lane, Thorpe Park, Leeds.

Members noted that this report had been submitted as part of the agreement to bring regular updates to Panel regarding the Manston Lane Link Road (MLLR).

Officers confirmed that the MLLR opened to traffic on 10<sup>th</sup> May 2019. It was understood that work would continue to complete the entire project (landscaping works) by the end of June.

Members were informed that the Thorpe Park bus service had also diverted off Selby Road onto the MLLR to provide the originally intended route to Crossgates and beyond.

Members welcomed the opening of the MLLR.

The Chair thanked officers and developers for their efforts in completing the scheme and suggested that the regular reporting of the project to City Plans Panel was no longer required.

**RESOLVED –**

- (i) That the contents of the report be noted and welcomed
- (ii) To agree that further regular reporting of the project to City Plans Panel was no longer required

**11 Date and Time of Next Meeting**

**RESOLVED –** To note that the next meeting will take place on Thursday, 27<sup>th</sup> June 2019 at 1.30pm in the Civic Hall, Leeds.