1.0 Introduction

1.1 This presentation is intended to inform Members of the emerging proposals for the demolition of the existing student development at Carlton Hill and the construction of a multi-storey student residential accommodation development.

2.0 Site and surroundings

2.1 The development site sits to the north of the city centre and directly north of the Leeds Inner Ring Road.

2.2 The site is located adjacent to the intersection of the A58/A64(M) inner ring road and the A660 Woodhouse Lane however the site does not have any direct vehicular access from either of these roads and is therefore detached from these busy thoroughfares. Vehicular access is via Clay Pit Lane and Carlton Gate to the east and the site has an existing pedestrian access to Woodhouse Lane.

2.2 The site is reasonably level and matches that of the surroundings, however due to the excavation of the inner ring road from some approaches the site appears
elevated. The north and south west boundaries contain dense vegetation and trees providing a buffer to the ring road to the south. To the north lies Blenheim Primary School, the adjacent playing field provides a large area of perceived green space directly next to the site. To the east lies Carlton Barracks which has history on the site dating back to 1865 and is one of the only recognisable features from the time before the construction of the inner ring road. This barracks now houses numerous military units.

2.3 The site also lies within the university zone with the University of Leeds, Leeds Beckett University and Leeds Arts University in close proximity. This area has seen significant development in recent years with a number of landmark projects including Broadcasting Place and Sky Plaza. All universities continue to expand and develop with numerous projects on site or in the planning in the immediate vicinity of the site.

2.4 The Site is not within a conservation area and is not in close proximity to any listed buildings thought there are listed buildings such as the Parkinson Building located within the wider vicinity. There are a number of conservation areas within the vicinity of the site – namely Woodhouse Lane – University Precinct, Woodhouse – Blenheim Square and Central – Queens Square.

3.0 Proposals

3.1 The proposal is for purpose-built undergraduate accommodation in 6-bed and 8-bed cluster apartments with shared living spaces. The scheme provides 604 bedspaces within 4 interlinked blocks. Block A is 6 storeys and 138 beds, Block B is 8 storeys with 99 beds, Block C 11 Storeys and 132 beds and block D 15 storeys and 224 beds.

3.2 The design reuses the approximate footprint of the existing student accommodation scheme. The scheme layout preserves the existing tree cover to the site perimeter with an increase of greenspace by the creation of a large landscaped courtyard, increased public realm, introduction of sky gardens and roof terraces.

3.3 The scheme will enhance the public realm and pedestrian connections along the north of the site providing better access to the residents of Little London to the east.

3.4 The design is aimed at local, national and international undergraduate students with affordability in mind. The applicant states that the scheme is proposed to be an alternative to the high rent models used within some neighbouring developments.

3.5 The provision of affordable student accommodation is important to accommodate a wider diversity of occupants. The number of units is considered necessary to ensure affordable operations and accommodation to maintain and meet expected demand, and to support the delivery of Unipol’s wider welfare agenda as required by the Universities.

3.6 The scheme includes an on-site management flat for 24 hour assistance.

3.7 The scheme has been subject to extensive negotiations with significant amendments being made to the design, scale and layout of the scheme. The overall height of the development has been reduced from 23 to 15 storeys with the entire existing site being now redeveloped to allow for the mass of the development to be moved south adjacent the Ring Road and City Centre away from the Blenheim Primary School.
and Broadcasting Place. As part of the developer’s presentation these changes will be explained in detail.

4.0 Relevant planning history

4.1 26/249/99/FU - 51 dwellings in 5 part three and part four storey blocks with car parking – Approved on 3rd July 2000.

5.0 Consultation responses

5.1 Highways Services– A transport assessment, a travel plan and a management plan for refuse collection and servicing arrangements and another for the start/end of term pick up/drop off will be required with any planning application.

The site is located in a fringe zone of Leeds City Centre, the Parking SPD identifies a maximum of 1:8 ratio of car parking spaces here. No parking is proposed for residents, this must be justified with a robust travel plan. Student residents would not be eligible for parking permits in the surrounding zone. Some parking for disabled residents and staff/maintenance requirements have been identified within the existing parking area of the site, these should be within the red line boundary if there for the proposed development.

The site has an existing pedestrian link to Woodhouse Lane leading to a controlled crossing and cycle/bus routes into Leeds City Centre and Universities. Pedestrian routes to this link need to be maintained within the site. Pedestrian routes to universities and onto Carlton Hill need to be investigated with any necessary improvement works identified. Clear pedestrian and cycle routes should be identified on the layout plan showing routes into and out of the site.

5.2 Flood Risk Management – The proposed development is located in Flood Zone 1 with no known flooding incidences at the site. Nevertheless, the finished floor levels should be raised above the adjacent road level. Any Flood Risk Assessment should therefore focus on the surface water drainage arrangements at the site.

A review of the BGS soils data identifies that the site is compatible for infiltration SuDS therefore following the surface water drainage hierarchy infiltration SuDS should be given priority when designing the surface water drainage.

Where infiltration is not considered viable, as the proposed development is classed as a Major development, the surface water runoff should revert back to the greenfield situation. Where this is shown not to be practical, FRM will allow a 50% reduction from the existing rate. The point of connection should be into the same drainage system the site currently drains to. A full drainage strategy should be provided with any further application. The surface water should be designed in accordance with our Minimum Development Control Standards for Flood Risk

FRM would like to see the use of above ground green SuDS, along with permeable paving on all hard standing areas considered within the final design where practicable.

A Pre Planning Sewer Enquiry should be submitted to Yorkshire Water and a copy of their response provided.
5.3 Contaminated Land Team - A minimum of a Phase 1 Desk Study Report will be required in support of the application. Depending on the outcome of the Phase 1 Desk Study, a Phase 2 Report and Remediation Statement may also be required.

5.4 LCC Environmental Studies (air quality) - Local air quality monitoring data indicate that air quality objective levels will not be exceeded at the development site, particularly if residential uses are confined to second floor level and above. As there appears to be no additional car parking associated with the development there should also be no adverse impact on air quality at other locations.

5.5 Landscaping - The site is surrounded by strategically important trees with high public amenity value. The protected trees on site should be retained in any layout with a min 5m clearance to the canopies (or RPA if greater) clearance for construction.

There are concerns about construction impacts to the west side as well where again it would appear not sufficient room has been allowed for construction

An Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA) is required. This must take account of drainage strategy/services, anticipated level changes. Importantly a 5m construction standoff should be considered to any tree canopies (or RPAs whatever is greater).

5.6 Conservation - The proposal potential affects the setting of numerous heritage assets, including the Parkinson building, and this needs to be assessed through rectified views from agreed viewpoints

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) and Core Strategy Selective Review 2019
- Saved UDP Policies (2006), included as Appendix 1 of the Core Strategy
- Site Allocation Plan (adopted 2019)

6.2 Leeds Core Strategy (CS)

6.2.1 The Core Strategy sets out the strategic level policies and vision to guide the delivery of development and the overall future of the district. 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 8 supports training/skills and job creation initiatives via planning agreements.
- Spatial Policy 11 includes a priority related to improved facilities for pedestrians to promote safety and accessibility and provision for people with impaired mobility.
- Policy H6B refers to proposals for purpose built student accommodation. Development will be controlled to take the pressure off the need to use private housing; to avoid the loss of existing housing suitable for families; to avoid excessive concentrations of student accommodation; to avoid locations that would lead to detrimental impacts on residential amenity; and to provide satisfactory living accommodation for the students.
- EC3 Safeguards existing employment land.
- 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.
- Policy P11 states that the historic environment and its settings will be conserved, particularly those elements which help to give Leeds its distinct identity.
- Policy P12 states that landscapes, including their historical and cultural significance, will be conserved and enhanced.
- 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.

6.3 Saved Unitary Development Plan Review policies (UDPR)

6.3.1 Relevant Saved Policies include:
- Policy GP5 states that all relevant planning considerations are to be resolved.
- Policy BD2 requires that new buildings complement and enhance existing skylines, vistas and landmarks.
- Policy BD5 requires new buildings to consider both their own amenity and that of their surroundings including usable space, privacy and satisfactory daylight and sunlight.
- LD1 sets out criteria for landscape schemes.

6.4 Natural Resources & Waste Local Plan

6.4.1 The Natural Resources and Waste Local Plan sets out where land is needed to enable the City to manage resources, like minerals, waste and water and identifies specific actions which will help use the natural resources in a more efficient way.

6.4.2 Relevant policies include:

WATER 1 requires development to include measures to improve their overall water efficiency. WATER 2 seeks protection of water quality in areas adjacent to sensitive water bodies. WATER 4 requires the consideration of flood risk issues and WATER 6 requires flood risk assessments. WATER 7 requires development not to increase surface water run-off. LAND 1 requires consideration of land contamination issues.
LAND 2 seeks new tree planting as part of an enhanced public realm. AIR1 states that all applications for major development will be required to incorporate low emission measures to ensure that the overall impact of proposals on air quality is mitigated.

6.5 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) February 2019

6.5.1 Paragraph 108 states that appropriate opportunities to promote sustainable transport modes should be taken up; safe and suitable access provided for all users; and any significant impacts on the highway mitigated. Paragraph 110 states that priority should be given to pedestrian and cycle movements; the needs of people with disabilities and reduced mobility addressed; creation of safe, secure and attractive spaces; allow for the efficient delivery of goods; and be designed to enable use by sustainable vehicles.

6.5.2 Chapter 12 identifies the importance of well-designed places and the need for a consistent and high quality standard of design. Paragraph 127 states that decisions should ensure that developments:

a) will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;

b) are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;

c) are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);

d) establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;

e) optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks; and

f) create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.

6.5.3 Paragraph 170 states that new and existing development should not be put at unacceptable risk or be adversely affected by unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution.

6.5.4 Chapter 16 refers to the historic environment. Paragraph 192 states that local planning authorities should take account of:

a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;

b) the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and

c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

Paragraph 193 states that “When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset’s conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be).” Paragraph 196 states that “Where a development proposal will lead to
less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use."

6.6 **Supplementary planning guidance**

- Accessible Leeds SPD
- Travel Plans SPD
- Tall Buildings SPD
- Building for Tomorrow Today: Sustainable Design and Construction SPD
- Neighbourhoods for Living SPG

**Other material considerations**

6.7 **Core Strategy Selective Review (CSSR)**

6.7.1 Paragraph 48 of the NPPF makes clear that the amount of weight given to relevant policies in emerging plans relates to a) how advanced the emerging plan is, b) the extent to which there are unresolved objections to relevant policies and c) the degree of consistency of those policies with the NPPF.

6.7.2 A selective review of the Leeds Core Strategy has been undertaken. Policy H9 in the CSSR expressly excludes purpose built student accommodation from the space standard a footnote to the policy states such development should reflect the NDSS with appropriate adjustments to address the particular characteristics of these types of development. They should also meet reasonable standards of general amenity for occupiers to include adequate space, light and ventilation. Further guidance will be provided through a Supplementary Planning Document in due course.

6.7.3 Paragraph 5.2.46 of the supporting text to policy H9 states that “Provision of reasonable space standards is still important for student accommodation, and this will need to be judged on a case by case basis, and via the application of any national standards that might be created in the future”.

7.0 **Issues**

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

7.1 **Principle of the development**

7.1.1 Policy H2 of the Core Strategy states that windfall sites will be acceptable in principle providing the number of dwellings does not exceed the capacity of transport, educational and health infrastructure, as existing or provided as a condition of development.

7.1.2 Policy H6B relates specifically to the provision of student housing. It has been established that there are approximately 38,000 university students in the city presently without access to purpose-built student accommodation suggesting that additional provision of such accommodation is unlikely to result in an over-supply of purpose-built student accommodation in the near future. Leeds Core Strategy paragraph 5.2.26 states that growth in new purpose built student accommodation is
to be welcomed in order to meet need and to deflect pressure away from private rented houses in areas of over-concentration.

7.1.3 The proposal is considered against the criteria set out below within the adopted policy H6B (identified in italics):

(i) *To help extend the supply of student accommodation taking pressure off the need for private housing to be used.*

The provision of approximately 604 student bedspaces would help to take reduce the need to use private housing for student accommodation.

(ii) *To avoid the loss of existing housing suitable for family accommodation.*

The existing site is a student development and therefore its redevelopment would not involve any loss of existing housing and would avoid the loss of residential family accommodation.

(iv) *To avoid locations which are not easily accessible to the universities.*

The site is located adjacent to the City Centre and is well-placed with regard to access to Leeds Beckett University, the Leeds University of Arts and the University of Leeds along Woodhouse Lane. As such the site easily accessible to the various University campuses.

Criteria (iii) and (v) of policy H6B are considered in the amenity section, at paragraph 7.2 below.

7.1.4 **Do Members consider that the proposed use of the site for student accommodation is acceptable in principle?**

7.2 Amenity considerations

7.2.1 Criteria (iii) of Core Strategy policy H6B aims to *avoid excessive concentrations of student accommodation which would undermine the balance and wellbeing of communities.*

7.2.2 Largely due to its proximity both to the universities and also the city centre the area is a focus for new purpose-built student accommodation, adding to that existing nearby at Blenheim Court Arena Village; Sky Plaza, on the west side of Clay Pit Lane, and Havana Residence on Cookridge Street and the various schemes in development and with extant permissions within the City Centre. The proposed student accommodation would provide an additional 604 bedspaces.

7.2.3 The impact on local residents from an additional large scale student development and whether the development would result in an excessive concentration of students which would undermine the balance and wellbeing of the area needs to be considered.

7.2.4 Criteria (v) of policy H6B requires that *the proposed accommodation provides satisfactory internal living accommodation in terms of daylight, outlook and juxtaposition of living rooms and bedrooms.*
7.2.5 Policy H9 in the CSSR expressly excludes purpose built student accommodation from the space standard a footnote to the policy states such development should reflect the Nationally Described Space Standard with appropriate adjustments to address the particular characteristics of these types of development. They should also meet reasonable standards of general amenity for occupiers to include adequate space, light and ventilation. Paragraph 5.2.46 of the supporting text to policy H9 states that “Provision of reasonable space standards is still important for student accommodation, and this will need to be judged on a case by case basis, and via the application of any national standards that might be created in the future”.

7.2.6 The Leeds Standard set a minimum target of 37sqm for a self-contained studio flat. This standard closely reflects the NDSS which seeks to promote a good standard of internal amenity for all housing types and tenures. No distinction is drawn within these documents between open market and student accommodation.

7.2.7 In addition, Core Strategy Policy P10 and Saved UDPR Polices BD5 and GP5 also provide more general requirements that development should contribute positively towards quality of life and provide a reasonable level of amenity and useable space. The assessment of amenity is also a wider consideration of qualitative factors including arrangement and separation of living functions (general living, sleeping, studying, eating, cooking, food preparation, storage and circulation), usable shape, outlook, privacy and external amenity space.

7.2.8 The format of the proposed scheme is one of 6 or 8 bedroom cluster flats with each flat having a communal kitchen and living area. The typical ensuite bedroom will be 16m2 and communal living space being between 35 and 65m2. All rooms will have an appropriate level of outlook and the layout of the scheme will ensure all rooms will also have an appropriate level of privacy. In addition to the communal space within the flats the scheme provides an additional 550m2 of communal space for all occupants.

7.2.9 The scheme also proposes 2,190m2 of communal greenspace made up of the courtyard and roof gardens. In addition 1,600m2 of public open space is to be provided. A further 1,00m2 of non-useable buffer landscaping is to be retained and maintained.

7.2.10 Core Strategy Policy G4 requires 18sqm of greenspace per student bedspace. As such, in addition to the proposed onsite provision a commuted sum will be required for additional offsite provision to ensure the requirements of G4 are satisfied. This sum would normally need to be targeted towards an identified scheme for new public space or improvements to existing provision which will directly benefit occupants of the scheme and nearby residents.

7.2.11 As the site is close to the A64(M) Inner Ring Road it is likely that internal noise levels could be unsatisfactory if glazing and ventilation are not designed to respond to the ambient noise levels. The use of acoustic glazing with a whole-building ventilation system could overcome these concerns. Local air quality monitoring data indicate that air quality objective levels will not be exceeded at the development site such that the occupiers of the development would experience acceptable air quality conditions.
Do Members consider that the living conditions within the student accommodation would be acceptable?

Townscape considerations

Any new development must also provide good design that is appropriate to its location, scale and function (Core Strategy Policy P10). Part (i) of the policy states that the size, scale, design and layout should be appropriate to its context and the development should protect and enhance skylines and views (ii). These policies accord with guidance in the NPPF which requires that development establishes a strong sense of place, using streetscapes and buildings to create attractive and comfortable places to live, work and visit; to respond to local character and history; and to reflect the identity of local surroundings.

The existing site comprises of 4 four storey student accommodation blocks constructed in the early 2000s. These low-rise buildings do not contribute significantly to the character of the area though their relative low stature is such that they are not prominent buildings within the streetscape. It is considered that their loss as part of the redevelopment of the site will not be detrimental to local character subject to the replacement building being of appropriate scale and design.

The proposed development will have a similar scale footprint as the existing development though clearly have a significant increase in height and mass. The proposal includes 4 interlinked blocks ranging from 15 storeys on the southern extent of the site adjacent to the Inner Ring Road stepping down to 11, 8 and 6 storeys as the scheme moves away from the City Centre towards the adjacent Primary School. This form attempts to provide an appropriate transition from the City Centre whereby the 15 storey element reflects and responds to the height of the Unite Sky Plaza building located on the southern side of the Ring Road to the lower scale residential development to the north of the Ring Road. The form of the development also seeks to provide an appropriate separation to the nearby Broadcasting Place development which is considered to be an important landmark building such that the development will not compete or detract from the design or setting of this building. As part of their presentation the developer will discuss the detailed design, fenestration treatment and materials proposed.

With specific reference to Blenheim Primary School, the design of the scheme has evolved to move the mass of the development away from the school and playing fields. The nearest block to the school is now 6 storeys and is a similar scale to the existing student block.

The height and scale of the scheme is such that it will be visible from a wider number of vantage from the City Centre and surrounds. It is important as well as sitting within its immediate surrounds consideration is given to the impact on views of important buildings and landmarks. In this case the development has the potential to impact on views of the Parkinson Building and nearby listed churches to the north of the site. The developer will provide visuals of a range of views in order for these impacts to be fully considered.

Do Members consider that the proposed mass and form of the development and its relationship with the surrounding context is acceptable?

Transportation and accessibility
7.4.1 The site is located in a highly sustainable location close to the many amenities offered by the adjacent City Centre and is readily accessible by a range of modes of transport. The development itself would be predominantly car-free, with a small number of spaces provided to be utilised for servicing the development. The spaces would also be available for student drop off and pick up at start and end of term time, their provision and use controlled by a management plan. A detailed servicing strategy needs to be developed and agreed.

7.4.2 Bike store areas for the development are proposed within the ground floor of the development. The cycling facilities would form a key element of the Travel Plan which will be submitted with the planning application.

7.4.3 The development, accommodating 604 students, will result in additional pedestrian and cycling movements to and from the universities and the City Centre, placing greater demands on existing and proposed highway crossings and footways along the route. The proposal includes measure to improve the capacity and appearance of the existing pedestrian access from the site onto Woodhouse Lane together with improvements to the permeability of the site allowing better and greater pedestrian access through the site to the residential area to the east. However, notwithstanding these improvements, there are some concerns regarding the capacity of the pedestrian routes particularly given the adjacent Ring Road and slip road limits wider pedestrian movement. As a consideration should be given to whether a scheme or developer contribution towards the improvement of the pedestrian environment in the area beyond the site boundary to accord with Core Strategy policies P10 and T2 is necessary. These measures could include improving the capacity of the nearby pedestrian crossings and widening of nearby footways.

7.4.4 Do Members consider that the development should deliver improvements to the pedestrian environment in the area beyond the immediate periphery of the site?

7.5 Trees and Landscaping

7.5.1 The existing site benefits from a mature tree belt on the western and northern boundaries. This provides important screening to the site and adjacent Blenheim Primary School in addition to soft landscaping in this heavily built edge of City Centre location. The layout proposed ensures that this tree belt is to be retained and where necessary enhance with further planting. Appropriate tree protection details and landscaping details will be required as part of any full application to ensure the trees are protected during construction and appropriately managed and maintained as part of the overall management of the development.

7.6 Wind

7.6.1 Due to the height of the building the applicant is mindful of the potential impact of the development on the local wind environment and will appoint a wind consultant to fully test the wind impact as the next stage of the design process. The findings of the assessment will be contained within a wind impact assessment which will be submitted with the planning application. Upon receipt of a wind study the Council will appoint their own experts to peer review the report’s findings.

7.7 Sustainability
7.7.1 The Core Strategy climate change policies are designed so that new development contributes to carbon reduction targets. Policy EN1 is flexible, allowing developers to choose the most appropriate and cost effective carbon reduction solution for their site. Major developments also need to meet the BREEAM Excellent standard if feasible (EN2). Where technically viable, appropriate for the development, and in areas with sufficient existing or potential heat density, major developments should propose heating systems, potentially connecting to the emerging district heating network (EN4(i)). At this stage of the design process detailed information regarding sustainability measures is not available but, as the scheme progresses, will be integrated into the detailed design.

7.8 Conclusion

7.8.1 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 use of the site for student accommodation is acceptable in principle?

Members consider that the living conditions within the student accommodation would be acceptable?

Do Members consider that the proposed mass and form of the development and its relationship with the surrounding context is acceptable?

Do Members consider that the development should deliver improvements to the pedestrian environment in the area beyond the immediate periphery of the site?