

## CITY PLANS PANEL

THURSDAY, 19TH NOVEMBER, 2020

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

Councillors D Blackburn, C Campbell,  
P Carlill, D Cohen, C Gruen, P Gruen,  
G Latty, A Khan, E Nash, P Wadsworth and  
N Walshaw

### 59 Appeals Against Refusal of Inspection of Documents

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

### 60 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.

### 61 Late Items

There were no late items of business identified.

### 62 Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

There were no declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests made at the meeting.

### 63 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor A Garthwaite.

### 64 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2020 were submitted for comment/ approval.

**RESOLVED** – That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2020 be accepted as a true and correct record.

### 65 Matters Arising from the Minutes

Although there were no matters arising from the minutes, Members wished to acknowledge the contribution of the following officers within Planning Services who had recently retired from the Council:

Mark Burgess, Tony Clegg, Robin Coghlan, Helen Farrar, Paul Kendal, Lois Pickering and Stephen Robson.

Members joined the Chair in expressing their thanks and appreciation to all concerned, wishing them every happiness for the future.

**RESOLVED** – That the Chair, on behalf of the Panel be requested to write to all concerned to express the thanks and appreciation of Members for their contribution to the service.

**66 Application No. 20/02958/FU - Demolition of existing buildings and construction of student accommodation with ground floor management, common facilities, and artist's studios, including flexible use rights Under Part 3, Class V for retail and commercial uses B1, A2, A3, A4, A5, D1 and D2, open space, public realm improvements, associated landscaping, infrastructure, access and parking at Caroline House, Diamond House, Sheepscar Street South, Sheepscar, Leeds LS7 1AD**

The Chief Planning Officer submitted a report which set out details of an application which sought the demolition of the existing buildings and the construction of student accommodation with ground floor management, common facilities, an artist's studio, including flexible use rights Under Part 3, Class V for retail and commercial uses B1, A2, A3, A4, A5, D1 and D2, open space, public realm improvements, associated landscaping, infrastructure, access and parking at Caroline House, Diamond House, Sheepscar Street South, Sheepscar, Leeds LS7 1AD.

Site photographs and plans were displayed and referred to throughout the discussion of the application.

The City Centre Team Leader addressed the Panel, speaking in detail about the proposal and highlighted the following:

- Site / location / context
- Near-by premises include: residential use, industrial use and Military Barracks. Sheepscar Beck is also in close proximity
- The proposal seeks the demolition of existing buildings and the construction of a part 6 and part 7 storey student residential accommodation containing 105 student flats providing 411 bedspaces with communal areas
- Accommodation to include 53 studio flats and 52 cluster flats consisting: 1 four bedroom cluster flat, 18 six bed cluster flats, 18 seven bed cluster flats and 15 eight bed cluster flats
- Formation of 2 courtyards to the north, with Sheepscar Beck running along part of the site boundary
- Main entrance located on Whitelock Street together with a commercial unit at ground level (East Street Arts is proposed to occupy the commercial unit)
- Facilities to include: 196sqm internal communal space at ground floor level, quiet study areas, multimedia areas, dining, common room and

laundry provision. Cinema and gym located on level six for all residents and external roof terrace. In total there would be a total 318sqm communal area for all residents outside their studio flat or cluster flat space.

- Materials – Red brick, detailed window reveals
- Provision of a green roof and biodiversity area
- Inclusion of air source heat pumps, photovoltaic cells and possible connection to district heating network
- Limited car parking in courtyard areas, electric vehicle charging bays
- Landscaping/ tree planting
- Widened footways 3m wide
- Off-site highway improvement works including parking bays and loading bay (Subject to the applicant entering a 278 Agreement with the local authority)

Members raised the following questions to officers/ applicants representatives:

- Were there any bats roosting on site
- Was there any cycle storage provision
- Could more details be provided about the flexible ground floor commercial space
- Would the applicant commit to a legal requirement to provide space for East Street Arts
- Was there any provision for E bike charging points
- The noise impact assessment as referred to at 7.5 of the submitted report, would the glazing and ventilation specifications adhere to the report recommendations and had ward Members been consulted
- Sheepscar Beck runs along part of the site boundary, could this be made a feature or enhanced
- The trees to the west of the main entrance; *Gleditsia triacanthos* could these trees be replaced with Weeping Willows
- From this student accommodation location, how would students get to the University area and were there safe crossing points across main roads
- Had consideration been given to the provision of balconies
- Could this building be reconfigured for other uses if there was a significant reduction in demand for student accommodation
- This is a long building which creates a massive brown block from a distance, could anything be done to break the long sequence of monotony

In responding to the issues raised, officers said:

- Members were informed that a full bat survey had been undertaken and no bats were found to be roosting, but further checks would be undertaken
- There were 82 cycle storage spaces and 14 short stay spaces.

- The applicant informed Members that the commercial space had already been identified as studio space for East Street Arts and that they were agreeable to committing to this provision in the legal agreement whilst East Street Arts still wanted the space
- The applicant's Transport Consultant said that E bike charging points would be located within the cycle shed
- Members were informed that the noise and glazing recommendations would be secured by condition. Ward Members had been consulted with no adverse comments being received
- The applicants landscape consultant said the landscaped area would open onto Sheepscar Beck with a transparent handrail being incorporated for safety
- The applicants landscape consultant said the selection of the trees had been undertaken in consultation with the LCC Landscape officer but happy to consult further with Members on tree species to achieve a satisfactory outcome
- The City Centre Team Leader said the University area was approximately a 20 minute walk away via North Street, Grafton Street and Wade Lane
- The LCC Highways officer confirmed there were existing safe crossing points at various locations, some were signalised
- The applicant informed Members that balconies had not been considered for health & safety reasons
- The applicant confirmed that the building could be reconfigured internally if required for alternative uses
- The City Centre Team Leader suggested that the set back from the pavement and provision of a two storey underpass halfway along Whitelock Street would help to mitigate the visual impact of the mass of the building and there were also different shades of red brick which would break up the façade. The LCC Design officer said there was a lot of articulation designed into the building, the Architect had done everything possible to break the mass down but accepted there was "visual gravitas" at distance. The applicant suggested that once the building became occupied and activity could be seen, this should improve the visual appearance

In offering comments Members raised the following issues:

- One Member suggested the proposal would change the character of the area, removing employment use and putting in its place residential use.
- A number of Members welcomed the climate change and sustainability proposals
- Members welcomed the quality in design when viewed close up
- The majority of Members expressed concern about the massing of the building, the red brick appeared to create a very large monotonous brown block, when viewed at a distance, "a brick too far" and that further discussion on the external appearance was required

It was moved and seconded that the application be approved subject to the conditions specified in the submitted report and subject to the reporting back to Panel of further details on the elevational treatment which would inform the conditional discharge phase of the scheme.

Upon being put to the vote, the motion was passed 11 votes to 1

**RESOLVED –**

- (i) That the application be deferred and delegated to the Chief Planning Officer for approval subject to the conditions specified in Appendix 1 of the submitted report (and any others which he might consider appropriate) and subject to the reporting back to Panel of further details on the elevational treatment which would inform the conditional discharge phase of the scheme and subject to the completion of a Section 106 Agreement to include the following obligations:
  - Restriction to student housing only during term times
  - Off-site greenspace contribution for improvements to Lovell Park or other planned public realm improvements in the area £272,562.55
  - Improvements to local Traffic Regulation Orders £7500
  - Travel plan monitoring fee £3215
  - Cooperation with local jobs and skill initiatives.
- (ii) In the event of the Section 106 Agreement not having been completed within 3 months of the resolution to grant planning permission, the final determination of the application shall be delegated to the Chief Planning Officer.

**67 Date and Time of Next Meeting**

**RESOLVED –** To note that the next meeting will take place on Thursday, 7<sup>th</sup> January 2021 at 1.30pm (Remote Meeting)