

NORTH AND EAST PLANS PANEL

THURSDAY, 9TH DECEMBER, 2021

PRESENT: Councillor J McKenna in the Chair

Councillors E Nash, N Sharpe, M Midgley,
B Anderson, G Almass, E Flint,
R. Stephenson and T Smith

SITE VISIT

The site visit was attended by Cllrs J McKenna, E Flint, N Sharpe, and B Anderson.

43 Election of Chair

RESOLVED – To elect Cllr McKenna to the Chair for the duration of the meeting.

44 Appeals Against Refusal of Inspection of Documents

There were no appeals against refusal of inspection of documents.

45 Exempt Information - Possible Exclusion of the Press and Public

There were no exempt items.

46 Late Items

There were no late items.

47 Declaration of Interests

No declarations of interests were made at the meeting.

48 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr C Gruen and Cllr A Lamb.

Cllr McKenna was present as substitute for Cllr Gruen and Cllr Smith was present as substitute for Cllr Lamb.

49 Minutes - 11th November 2021

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting held on 11th November 2021, be approved as a correct record.

50 Application 20/03519/FU and 20/03520/LI - Demolition of the Nave and Aisles of the church, replaced with a six storey extension; the Chancel, Transept and Altar areas will be retained and restored to contain 62 no. apartments. The Presbytery will also be demolished and replaced with a 5 storey apartment block of 113 no. apartments (total residential development comprising of 175 units); Other works including new access, proposed EVCP parking, cycle storage and landscaping works at Mount St Marys Church, Church Road, Richmond Hill, Leeds, LS9 8LA

The report of the Chief Planning Officer presented an application in relation to demolition of the nave and aisles of the church, replaced with a six storey extension; the chancel, transept and altar areas will be retained and restored to contain 62 apartments. The presbytery will also be demolished and replaced with a five storey apartment block of 113 apartments; other works including new access, proposed EVCP parking, cycle storage and landscaping works at Mount St Marys Church, Church Road, Richmond Hill, Leeds, LS9 8LA.

Members had visited the site earlier in the day. Throughout the officers' presentation Members were shown slides and photographs.

It was acknowledged that Members had resolved to defer and delegate approval of the applications to officers, subject to the completion of S106 Agreement at the 18th February 2021 meeting of North and East Plans Panel.

Members were informed that the scheme was now returning to Panel as the applicant was now seeking greater flexibility in terms of the potential delivery method to include Build to Rent, as originally reported and now also Build to Sell. It was noted that this chosen delivery method would have a differing impact on the scheme's overall viability compared to that which was presented to Members in February. Therefore, it was necessary for this element of the proposal to be presented for consideration.

Members were advised that, in light of this, this report was to focus on the consideration of the viability appraisal only and how this could impact on ability to fulfil any planning obligations necessitated by the development (which will be ensured via the review mechanism). It was noted that there had been no other changes to material considerations since the proposals were last reported to Panel, including that the planning context remained the same.

It was recognised that a number of the current Panel Members were not party to the consideration of the scheme in February 2021. Therefore, a copy of the original officer report was attached to the submitted report at Appendix 1 along with a copy of the minutes from the February 2021 meeting appended at Appendix 2.

Members were requested to note that the officer recommendations remained as set out in February 2021, with the exception of the delivery method which now included both Build to Rent and Build to Sell options.

Members were advised of the following points:

- The building had been vacant since 1989 and had fallen into a state of dilapidation.
- Ward Members had been consulted on the proposals for the new delivery methods. It was noted that Cllr R Graham had requested potential values for sale which had been supplied to him, but no further representations had been received from Cllr Graham since the figures were provided.
- The alternative delivery options would form part of the S106 agreement and its clauses providing for a viability review. The developers wished to be able to supply housing to a wider market.
- That the submitted viability statements showed that both Build to Rent and Build for Sale options would not be viable and both were projected to deliver significant financial losses. That the Build to Rent viability had been calculated with a targeted 8% profit level and Build to Sell on a 15% profit level.

Members' discussions included:

- The use of highways funding for the clearance and maintenance of the steps which would provide access to and from the site.
- The use and refurbishment of the Chancel and Transept including the Rose Window as an open space.
- The use of the chosen materials to provide a contemporary contrast to the original building.
- Consultation that had taken place with Conservation officers and Historic England regarding maintaining public access to key areas for occasions such as Heritage Open Days, materials to be used, and the balance between what areas of the building will be demolished and what can be retained / restored.
- The travel fund which would promote car sharing, walking, cycling and public transport. Given the favourable location of the site, at the edge of the city centre and with good connectivity, the focus is on sustainable modes of transport being used rather than a focus on car parking provision.
- It was noted that there would 56 parking spaces which would include car club spaces and disabled spaces. It was also noted that there was provision for EVCP for all but 2 parking spaces and there would 138 cycle spaces.
- Expected affordable housing provision and how this interacts with the viability review mechanism proposed to form part the S106 Agreement's terms.
- Members expressed a view that they wished to retain the Celtic Cross as part of the refurbishment. It was noted that this could be imposed as a condition.

The District Valuer provided the Panel with information in relation to the proposals for both options either Build to Rent or Build to Sell. He also explained the position in relation to affordable housing on this site.

Members were advised that should the development make a profit, the review mechanism set out in the submitted report would be used to assess if the developer was able to make a contribution for affordable housing.

The Developer was present at the meeting and at the request of the Chair explained that this exercise would provide flexibility in options to assess potential in profit to fund the project.

In summing up, the Area Planning Manger advised the Panel that the February Plans Panel had resolved to grant planning permission and listed building consent subject to the completion of the S106 Agreement. That there had been no material change to policy or circumstance relating to the planning merits of the case since that time. This report had been brought to Panel for Members to solely consider the inclusion of the alternative delivery method (i.e. Build to Sell) for the purposes of viability review clause in that S106 Agreement. It was the view of officers at the current time that, based on existing viability calculations, there was a need to forgo affordable housing to ensure that key elements of this building – of both historic and architectural interest – would be saved and redevelopment of the site proceed after the elapse of such a considerable length of time.

RESOLVED - To defer and delegate planning permission as set out in the submitted report with the following additional conditions:

- Original Celtic Cross to be saved and repositioned if necessary
- Maintenance of the Grade II areas of the site
- Highways contribution to include the refurbishment of the steps

51 Date and Time of Next Meeting

RESOLVED – That the next meeting of North and East Plans Panel will be on Thursday 13th January 2022, at 1:30pm in Civic Hall, Leeds.

CHAIRS CLOSING COMMENTS

The Chair expressed his pleasure at this site going forward. He said that as Member of Plans Panel he had seen numerous applications for this site. He looked forward to seeing this development which would restore some of the original building to its former glory.

He thanked everyone for their attendance and contributions and wished all a Merry Christmas.

The meeting concluded at 14:25