

CITY PLANS PANEL

THURSDAY, 24TH MARCH, 2022

PRESENT: Councillor J McKenna in the Chair

Councillors K Brooks, P Carlill, D Cohen,
A Garthwaite, C Gruen, G Latty, E Nash,
P Wadsworth and N Walshaw

SITE VISITS

Cllrs Gruen and McKenna attended the site visits earlier in the day to Skinner Street and Yorkshire Post sites.

125 Appeals Against Refusal of Inspection of Documents

There were no appeals against refusal of inspection of documents.

126 Exempt Information - Possible Exclusion of Press and Public

There were no exempt items.

127 Late Items

There were no late items.

128 Declaration of Interests

No declarations of interests were made at the meeting.

129 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors David Blackburn and Colin Campbell.

130 Minutes - Thursday 24 February 2022

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting held on 24th February 2022, be approved as a correct record. There were no matters arising.

131 APPLICATION NO. 19/02081/FU - Planning Application for residential development and ancillary flexible commercial space (use class A1, A2, A3, A4, B1 and D1) on land at Ellerby Road and East Street, Cross Green, Leeds

The Chief Planning Officer submitted a report on planning application 19/02081/FU Full Planning Application for residential development and ancillary flexible commercial space (use class A1, A2, A3, A4, B1 and D1) on land at Ellerby Road and East Street, Cross Green, Leeds

Members were informed of the following points:

- The report was brought to Panel to update Members because it related to a change in the affordable housing position that was considered on a

major planning application in the City Centre that proposes a sub-policy position on affordable housing due to financial viability considerations.

- The application had been approved at City Plans Panel on 2 September 2021 subject to the completion of the Section 106 legal agreement.
- The Section 106 Agreement had included an obligation for affordable housing provision of 18 discounted rent (80% of market rent) flats on site subject to an overage clause upon practical completion of the development. The applicant had offered to increase the number of affordable units up from 5% as proposed to a potential maximum policy compliant position of 20% should the viability of the project and market conditions improve, and subject to an updated viability appraisal. This would have formed part of the Section 106 legal agreement.
- The applicants had now advised they cannot agree to an overage clause as envisaged. This was due to increases in construction costs, changes in policy for the mandatory fitting of sprinklers and misting systems in this type of development which would add to the cost of delivering this scheme.
- Members were advised that overage clauses can be offered and accepted by the Council but were not required by adopted planning policy and were not insisted on.

District Valuer- Brian Maguire was present at the Plans Panel and informed the Panel of the following points:

- This scheme had initially been looked at in 2019, when the applicant had offered 18 affordable discounted rent units and an overage clause within the context of Member support for a denser scheme.
- Notwithstanding the applicant's offer the District Valuer was of the opinion that it was optimistic at the time.
- Since then discussions had taken place between the District Valuer and the applicant on the overage clause, but no agreement could be reached on the profit levels. The applicant wanted the overage to be triggered by a 15% profit on cost whilst the District Valuer is of the view that the trigger should be the same as the original viability appraisal i.e. 8% profit on cost
- However when appraised in 2020, construction costs had escalated and even with a profit level of 8%, the District valuer was of the view that it would be difficult to provide 18 discounted rent affordable units and therefore the overage clause requirement is unlikely to realise any additional affordable units in this case.

Responding to a question the District Valuer was of the view that 12 discounted affordable rent units would be his estimate of a financially viable position if costs remained the same.

RESOLVED – To defer and delegate to the Chief Planning Officer for approval subject to the conditions specified in the submitted report.

It was noted that Cllr Brooks voted against the recommendation.

132 PREAPP/21/00338 - Pre-application presentation of proposed multi-storey residential development on land between Westgate and Croppergate, Leeds LS1 4ND

The Chief Planning Officer submitted a pre-application presentation of proposed multi-storey residential development on land between Westgate and Cropper Gate, Leeds, LS1 4ND

Attending for this item were:

- Tom Cook
- Christian Gilham

Members had visited this site earlier in the day. Photographs, Slides and CGI's were shown throughout the presentation.

Members were provided with the following information:

- Ridgeback Group is a build to rent company which has multiple schemes across the country which they have delivered and operate.
- This build to rent scheme is on Wellington Street, it is proposed as a 31storey building with 1,2,3, bed units. The units will be in line with space standards and will be sustainable.
- The development will be a gateway building to the city which will connect footpaths and cycle routes to other proposed developments on Westgate.
- The proposal is for 2 access points to the development with sprinklers, cycle storage and bins located on Skinner Street. With apartments on the upper floors. It was noted that no apartments would look out on to Ebor Court.
- In relation to the design several factors had been taken into consideration including wind tests and massing.
- This is a contemporary design using materials which are relevant to Leeds. It was proposed that materials would be brick with metallic panels used for the windows.
- This development proposes 400 units, no car parking spaces to be provided with a landscape design incorporating permeable routes.

Responding to questions from Members the Panel were provided with the following information:

- Landscaping and network routes would be undertaken in consultation with Highways Officers. It was noted that a legal mechanism would be required to ensure that the public realm was maintained.
- Sprinkler tanks, bin storage will be located on the ground floor with access from Skinner Street. The principal access to the development would from Cropper Gate.
- Glazing would be maximised where possible.
- The developer was in conversation with neighbouring developments in relation to parking for disabled residents.
- It was noted that the slides showed a large expanse of brick, which would now be replaced with windows

- Members were invited to view the materials proposed for this scheme which had been brought to the meeting.

Members comments included:

- This is a good and attractive statement building
- Safety and security looked good
- It is surrounded by roads and there is a need for green space for the future residents
- Some members were of the view that total symmetry would make the building look bland
- Members agreed that this development should be car free but disabled parking should be considered.
- The road and public car park at the side of the development should be considered as part of the green amenity space in consultation with Highways plans for the area.

Members were invited to provide feedback on the following questions posed in the submitted report:

1. Do Members support the proposed scale and form of the development?

Members supported the proposed scale and form of the development. They noted the housing mix proposed but would prefer to see more 3 bed units.

2. Do Members consider that the emerging approach to landscape and public realm is acceptable?

Members were of the view that it could be better, they were of the view that the design of the building was excellent.

3. Do Members support the approach to a car free development subject to no adverse impacts on highways being demonstrated?

Members support the approach of a car free development as it was located close to transport links. However, they wished to see provision for disabled parking.

133 PREAPP/21/00250 - Pre-Application for Purpose built student accommodation and residential development at the former Yorkshire Post site, Wellington Street, Leeds

The Chief Planning Officer submitted a report to City Plans Panel to inform Members at an early stage of the emerging proposals for two purpose-built student residential blocks, a new build to rent residential block and associated public realm on the remainder of the former Yorkshire Post site.

Present at the meeting were:

- Tim Waring
- Sue Sparling
- Terry Shaw

Earlier in the day the Members had visited the site. Slides, photographs and CGI's were shown throughout the presentation.

Members were provided with the following information:

- This is to be a key gateway site at the west part of the city. The developer hopes to start in 2023
- Building A would be the closest to Wellington Street, and step via two 'shoulders' from 13 storeys to a maximum height of 40 storeys. The building is proposed for purpose-built student accommodation and would provide 1,065 units with a mix of cluster apartments and studio apartments.
- Building B is proposed to be 30 storeys high set back 13m from the closest point to Building A. This is also proposed as purpose-built student accommodation and would provide 550 units.
- Building C is proposed as being at the southern part of the site adjacent to the River Aire and steps via two 'shoulders' from 12 storeys and 14 storeys to a maximum of 25 storeys in height. It is proposed that it will provide approximately 320 apartments, including roof top external amenity space.
- It is proposed that the buildings will be set in landscaped public realm which will cover two thirds of the site. This is to include:
 - Connections to the external public highway, with two-way access to Wellington Street and one way access from Wellington Bridge Street
 - A public square with art structures which will show the history of the site from a woollen mill and the printing of the Yorkshire Evening Post. The developer proposes to incorporate the iconic clock tower within the scheme.
 - Public realm includes a riverside walk, play area, links to the Headline building and a micro forest area which will take a period of 20 years to establish but will improve oxygen levels and acoustics
 - The play area will include active play and a time trial for adults.
- The material for the buildings is proposed as terracotta bricks which link to the history of the city. The design will incorporate a fold and weave on the façade, the design will address acoustic and air quality. Windows will be able to be opened.

In response to questions from Members the Panel were provided with the following information:

- The micro forest would be planted with up to 20 species of different trees known to be able to survive in the locality. The benefits that the micro forest would add were of air quality and links to the riverside walk. The micro forest would be made up of shrubs, sub tree layer, tree layer and canopy layer, a specific growing medium would be imported onto the site. The developer will work with a consultant to ensure that species of trees chosen will thrive in this locality. The micro forest would be maintained as appropriate through a legal obligation. This area would provide habitat for insects and wildlife. It was noted that the choice of species proposed should be shared with Cllr Nash.

- Members were advised that most of the units in Building B (student accommodation) were cluster flats with some studio apartments (the report was incorrect in this respect).
- With regards to the build to rent building C, it was noted that this part of the development would be managed the same as the adjacent Headline building. All apartments would be in line with the Leeds space standards. The developers could look at more family sized units, however, the 2 bed 4 person units were 74 square metres and the 3 bed 4 person units were also 74 square metres. There was therefore an option for the 2 bed 4 person units to be adapted into 3 bed units if required by the occupiers.
- There would be parking spaces for disabled residents and visitors.
- 35 wind studies had taken place to ensure safety and comfort for pedestrians through the site with faceted towers, public art structures of differing heights and trees to allow wind to flow through the development.
- Residents would have the choice of either opening windows or the use of mechanical air flow. All windows would have a grill for safety. This was part of the future proofing of the development. It was noted that as more vehicles become electric the noise and pollution from the busy roads would decrease. Noise and air quality surveys had been undertaken.
- The developers all live in Leeds and realise that the clock tower is an iconic part of Leeds and used as a well-known landmark. It is the intention to replace and maintain this feature as part of the development.
- The developers were confident that the students and non-student residents could live side by side sharing the public amenity space.
- There were concerns in relation to parking as it had been noted by the Members on their visit, there were unauthorised cars parked at the rear of the Headline building which would need to be addressed.
- It was the view that building B had a less attractive frontage, and that it could be better. However, it was recognised that this area would have fewer pedestrians passing by and the lower level would form part of the cycle and bin storage
- It was noted that some of the trees on the riverside had suffered from storm damage and would be looked at as part of this scheme.

Members comments included:

- Members welcomed the use of art structures celebrating the previous industries which had occupied this site, and how they would be used to mitigate wind flow through the development.
- This was a good application which would enhance this area.
- A thoughtful presentation which had provided a lot of answers. Particularly liked the use of trees as wind baffles.
- Like the openable windows as recognised in 10 years the noise and pollution levels would be different.

The Chair thanked the applicants for the presentation and the detailed model which had been available for Members to view.

Members were invited to offer comments on officer questions in the report.

1. Do Members support the emerging proposals in respect of the principle of student /residential development?

Members agreed with the emerging proposals.

2. Do members support the proposed emerging approach to landscaping and pedestrian connectivity?

Members were supportive of the emerging approach to landscaping and pedestrian connectivity.

3. Do members support the emerging approach to car parking provision?

Members supported this approach to car parking provision.

134 Date and Time of Next Meeting

The next meeting of City Plans Panel will be on Thursday 21st April 2022 at 1:30pm in Civic Hall.

The meeting concluded at 16:00

135 City Plans Panel - 24th March 2022 - Presentation Slides