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**Report of the Chief Planning Officer**

**CITY PLANS PANEL**

**23<sup>rd</sup> March 2023**

**Pre-application presentation of proposed demolition of existing building and construction of 10 storey purpose built student accommodation block at land at 76 York Street, Leeds (PREAPP/21/00142).**

**Developer- Breslin Properties Ltd**

<p><b>Electoral Wards Affected:</b></p> <p><b>Little London &amp; Woodhouse (on the boundary with Hunslet and Riverside)</b></p>	<p><b>Specific Implications For:</b></p> <p>Equality and Diversity <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Community Cohesion <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Narrowing the Gap <input type="checkbox"/></p>
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<p><b>RECOMMENDATION: This report is brought to Plans Panel for information. The Developer will present the details of the emerging scheme to allow Members to consider and comment on the proposals at this stage.</b></p>
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**1.0 INTRODUCTION:**

1.1 This presentation is intended to inform Members at an early stage of the emerging proposals for the redevelopment of the site comprising the demolition of the existing buildings and the construction of a student residential accommodation development. The scheme is brought to City Plans Panel to allow Panel Members to make comments to inform progression of proposals.

**2.0 SITE AND SURROUNDINGS:**

2.1 The site lies within the designated City Centre as defined by the Site Allocations Plan and is unallocated in terms of land use. The site is close to, but outside of, the boundary of the Aire Valley Area Action Plan. The site is within the Little London and Woodhouse ward with the railway arches to the south forming the ward boundary with Hunslet and Riverside.

2.2 The application site occupies a small rectangular parcel of land measuring 0.05 hectares on the south side of York Street, to the east of Leeds City Centre and

immediately south of Quarry Hill. The site is contained by York Street to the north and railway arches (in active use) to the south. The Northern Ballet Centre sits directly opposite, on the north side of York Street.

- 2.3 The site is vacant with hoarding except for a derelict two-storey brick building with gable roof which borders onto Brick Street. The building was previously in use as a nightclub. Notable features include large stone windowsills and headers, and detailed brick brackets supporting the eaves. The building is in a poor state with several windows having been filled in with bricks and concrete blocks.
- 2.4 The wider area is generally commercial in nature but is undergoing significant residential development. Currently under construction are new apartment blocks to the north at Quarry Hill, and to the south east at Saxton Lane / Flax Place. Planning permission has also been granted for apartments at Saxton Lane / Foundry Street. The new apartment blocks will range in height from 6 to 22 storeys.

### **3.0 PROPOSAL:**

- 3.1 The intention is to demolish the existing building on site and to construct a 10 storey purpose built student block. The building would contain 121 bedspaces (all studios) which would range in size from 20-34m<sup>2</sup>.
- 3.2 The proposal includes shared amenity space on both the ground and 10<sup>th</sup> floor. There would be a gym and lounge area at ground floor, and a study area and roof terrace at 10<sup>th</sup> floor. Areas for bin storage and plant equipment would be provided across the ground floor and basement.
- 3.3 No car parking is proposed in light of its city centre location, however, an area for cycle storage would be provided at ground floor.
- 3.4 All servicing vehicles (including refuse collection) would be expected to make use of an existing loading bay located 45m to the south along Brick Street (this would need to be made bigger to accommodate a refuse vehicle). In terms of student start and end of term pick-up and drop-off the intention would be to make use of the loading bay which could accommodate 2 car parking spaces. Although the applicant is confident the 2 spaces should be sufficient if this cannot be satisfactorily demonstrated they will commit to acquiring additional spaces.
- 3.5 The proposal includes closing Brick Street to vehicles between York Street and Brussels Street and creating a shared space for cyclists and pedestrians. Notwithstanding the intention to close Brick Street to vehicular traffic, any proposal must not obstruct Network Rail's ability to access the railway arches to undertake maintenance and repairs. This would be considered in more detail at full application stage.

### **4.0 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY:**

- 4.1 Ref: 19/03515/FU  
Description: Change of use and two storey side extension to form hostel and ground floor cafe (A3 use) with two storey outbuilding forming office and bin store to side  
Decision: Approved  
Date: 13.11.2019
- 4.2 Ref: 17/05547/FU

Description: Change of use of former nightclub to a backpacker's hostel with ancillary cafe/bar and addition of dormer windows to east and west aspects and associated alterations to form outside communal space (Revised proposals of previously approved application 14/02086/FU)

Decision: Approved

Date: 16.10.2017

4.3 Ref: 14/02086/FU

Description: Change of use of former nightclub to a backpacker's hostel with ancillary cafe/bar and addition of dormer windows to east and west aspects and associated alterations

Decision: Approved

Date: 30.03.2015

4.4 Ref: 20/620/00/FU

Description: Change of use and external alterations of betting office to night club

Decision: Approved

Date: 05.06.2001

4.5 Ref: 20/340/00/FU

Description: Change of use of betting office and boxing gym to cafe bar

Date: 06.09.2000

4.6 Planning permission has been granted for several tall buildings in recent years in this part of the city centre:

- Two apartment buildings ranging from 6 to 22 storeys with 349 apartments to the west at Saxton Lane / Flax Place (ref. 19/01010/FU),
- One residential building ranging from 15 to 20 storeys with 204 apartments to the south west at Saxton Lane / Foundry Street (ref. 20/04145/FU),
- Five residential buildings ranging from 12 to 22 storeys with 1012 apartments to the north at Shannon Street / Marsh Lane (19/04471/FU), and,
- 331 build to rent units at St Peters Street, Quarry Hill (ref. 20/06989/RM)

4.7 Planning approval is also likely to be forthcoming for a 5 storey apartment building with 58 apartments on land at Railway Street / Flax Place (ref. 21/08380/FU).

## 5.0 CONSULTATION RESPONSES:

### 5.1 LCC Highways

- The site is in a sustainable location within Leeds City Centre being within walking distance to a number of nearby bus stops, the bus station and interchanges and the train station.
- Students staying in the proposed apartment block will benefit from the Duke Street upgrade scheme (which will improve cycling and walking from Duke Street, over Crown Point Bridge and down Black Bull Street). In line with other developments a contribution of £606 per flat towards the scheme should be provided under a full application.
- There are no concerns in respect to no car parking provision on account of its sustainable location. However, should parking issues occur in the surrounding residential areas as a result of the proposals (a radius of 800 metres is applied) then a contribution towards implementing Traffic Regulation Orders will be required.
- The proposal to utilise an existing loading bay for servicing 45m to the south at Brick Lane is likely to be acceptable, however, the loading bay will need to be increased in size to accommodate a 2.5m x 11m refuse vehicle. A Service

Management Plan will be required because 45m exceeds the recommended walking distance for a servicing area.

- The principle of closing Brick Street to vehicles between York Street and Brussels Street and laying out as a shared space for pedestrians and cyclists is acceptable subject to agreement with Network Rail and the adjacent businesses. Brick Street should be fully resurfaced to provide a shared route, there should not be segregated footways and carriageway.
- The application proposes using the loading bay identified to the south on Brick Street for student pick-up and drop-off which will be able to accommodate two parking spaces. The acceptability of this level of provision will be demonstrated through a Management Plan which will be submitted with the formal application. If it is not possible to demonstrate that this level of provision is sufficient to meet the operational needs of the proposed development, the applicant will make provision for space/s elsewhere. Highways have confirmed this approach is acceptable.

5.2 LCC Flood Risk Management – The site is located within Flood Zone 1 and there have been no records of any recent flooding within the property or adjacent areas. As the site is at low risk of flood risk the key issue will be providing a drainage solution compliant with the Leeds CC Minimum development Control Standards for Flood Risk.

5.3 LCC Conservation – The proposal involves the loss of the existing building on the site which was built between 1914 and 1937 and appears to be a former industrial or warehousing building. It does not have sufficient significance to be considered a non-designated heritage asset. The proposal does not affect the setting of any other heritage assets.

5.4 LCC Contaminated Land – The proposed end use of the development is sensitive and past potentially contaminative land uses have been identified which could pose a potential risk to the proposed development. Based on the available information, should a formal planning application be submitted then a minimum of a Phase 1 Desk Study Report would need to be provided in support of the planning application. Depending on the outcome of the Phase 1 Desk Study, a Phase 2 (Site Investigation) Report and Remediation Statement may also be required.

5.5 LCC Landscape – Supportive of the landscaping proposals.

5.6 Network Rail – Given the proximity of the scheme to the operational railway viaduct and associated high voltage overhead line equipment, the developer will be expected to work closely with Network Rail prior to demolition and construction work commencing on site in order to ensure that work can be undertaken safely, without impact to the stability of the viaduct and operational railway safety. A full application would also need to consider Network Rail requirements on drainage, glint and glare, railway noise mitigation, lighting, landscaping, vehicle incursion measures and trespass proof fencing. The proposal should retain Network Rail's ability to access, inspect and maintain the railway arches.

## **6.0 RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES:**

### **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

application, the Development Plan for Leeds currently comprises the following documents:

- The Leeds Core Strategy (Adopted November 2014)
- Saved UDP Policies (2006), included as Appendix 1 of the Core Strategy
- The Natural Resources & Waste Local Plan (NRWLP, Adopted January 2013) including revised policies Minerals 13 and 14 (Adopted September 2015).
- Site Allocations Plan (Adopted July 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 3 seeks to maintain and enhance the role of the City Centre as an economic driver for the District and City Region.
- 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 CC1 outlines the planned growth within the City Centre. Part B encourages residential development, providing that it does not prejudice town centre functions and provides a reasonable level of amenity for occupiers.
- Policy CC3 states new development will need to improve connections within the City Centre.
- Policy H2 refers to new housing development on non-designated sites.
- Policy H3 refers to housing density requirements.
- 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. 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".
- 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 G6 protects existing open space and pedestrian corridors in the City Centre.

- Policy G9 states that development will need to demonstrate biodiversity improvements.
- Policies EN1 and EN2 set targets for CO<sup>2</sup> reduction and sustainable design and construction, and at least 10% low or zero carbon energy production on-site.
- Policy EN4 states that where technically viable major developments should connect to district heating networks.
- Policy EN5 identifies requirements to manage flood risk.
- Policy ID2 outlines the Council's approach to planning obligations and developer contributions.

### 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 BD4 relates to provision for all mechanical plant on and servicing of new developments.
- 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.
- Policy LD1 sets out criteria for landscape schemes.
- Policy N19 requires new buildings adjacent to conservation areas to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the relevant areas.

### 6.4 **Natural Resources and Waste Local Plan (NRWLP)**

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:

- Air 1 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.
- Water 1 requires development to include measures to improve their overall water efficiency.
- Water 4 requires the consideration of flood risk issues.
- Water 6 requires flood risk assessments.
- Water 7 requires development not to increase surface water run-off and to introduce SUDS where feasible.
- Land 1 requires consideration of land contamination issues.
- Land 2 requires that development conserves trees where possible.

### 6.5 **Site Allocations Plan 2019 (SAP)**

6.5.1 The site is not specifically identified in the SAP.

### 6.6 **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)**

6.6.1 The revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) replaces previous planning policy guidance and statements in outlining the Government's planning policies for England and how these

are expected to be applied. One of the key principles at the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of Sustainable Development set out in three parts: Economic, Social, and Environmental. Relevant paragraphs of the NPPF are as outlined below.

- 6.6.2 Paragraph 110 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 112 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.
- 6.6.3 Chapter 12 identifies the importance of well-designed places and the need for a consistent and high quality standard of design. Paragraph 126 states that the creation of high quality buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities. Paragraph 130 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.
- 6.6.4 Chapter 14 identifies the approach to meeting the climate change challenge. New development should avoid increased vulnerability to the range of impacts arising from climate change and should be planned to help reduce greenhouse gas emissions, such as through its location, orientation, and design (paragraph 154).
- 6.6.5 Chapter 15 identifies guidelines for conserving and enhancing the natural environment. Paragraph 174 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. Development should, wherever possible, help to improve local environmental conditions.
- 6.6.6 Chapter 16 refers to the historic environment. Paragraph 197 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.

6.6.7 Paragraph 199 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 202 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.”

## 6.7 **Supplementary guidance**

- Tall Buildings Design Guide SPD
- Transport SPD
- Building for Tomorrow Today: Sustainable Design and Construction SPD
- Neighbourhoods for Living SPG
- Accessible Leeds SPD
- City Centre Urban Design Strategy SPG

Consultation on the draft Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs), Purpose Built Student Accommodation (PBSA) and Co-Living SPD, intended to ensure an appropriate standard of amenity for such forms of development was completed on 1<sup>st</sup> March 2021. At the current time the SPD carries limited weight.

## 7.0 **KEY ISSUES**

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

### 7.1 Principle of the proposed use

7.1.1 The site is located within the designated City Centre.

7.1.2 Core Strategy Policy CC1(b) encourages residential development in city centre locations providing that the development does not prejudice the functions of the City Centre and that it provides a reasonable level of amenity for occupiers. The proposal would deliver student accommodation in a sustainable location and would add further variety in land use and activity within an already mixed-use city centre environment.

7.1.3 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. 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 is unlikely to result in an over-supply of purpose-built student accommodation in the near future.

7.1.4 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 121 student bedspaces would help reduce the need to use private housing for student accommodation.

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

The proposal does not propose the loss of any family housing.

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

The site is located towards the eastern end of the City Centre and is within easy walking and cycling distance of Leeds Beckett University (City Centre campus), Leeds Arts University and University of Leeds. Based on Google maps the development would be a 19 to 30 minute walk or a 7 to 11 minute cycle from the universities listed above. The development is also located close to Leeds City Bus Station which provides a regular bus service along Woodhouse Lane towards the universities.

Criteria (iii) and (v) of the policy are considered in the amenity section below.

#### 7.1.5 **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 There is presently no student accommodation in the immediate area and there is no evidence of harm to the balance and wellbeing of the local community. The students would likely help to support existing businesses within the area.

7.2.3 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.*

7.2.4 Although policy H9 in the Core Strategy expressly excludes purpose built student accommodation from the minimum space standards for new dwellings a footnote 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 future”.

7.2.5 Core Strategy Policy H10 and Saved UDPR Policies BD5 and GP5 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). The draft Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs), Purpose Built Student Accommodation (PBSA) and Co-Living SPD includes minimum requirements for room sizes and supporting spaces for PBSA although, due to its ‘draft’ status the SPD currently can only be afforded limited weight.

7.2.6 The format of the proposed scheme is similar to many of the purpose-built student accommodation already approved within the city centre. In total there would be 121 studio rooms which would range in size from 20sqm – 24sqm. 1 of the studios would

be larger at 34sqm. The sizes of the studio rooms are comparable with the standards identified in the emerging draft SPD.

- 7.2.7 Areas of dedicated amenity space for use by students would be provided. There would be a common room (64sqm) and a gym (101sqm) at ground floor, and a study area (47sqm) and rooftop terrace (189sqm) on the tenth floor. The provision and retention of these spaces would be critical in ensuring adequate amenities for the occupiers of the development.
- 7.2.8 Student bedrooms would be located at first floor and above providing separation from activities at pedestrian level outside the building. The scheme has been carefully designed to ensure that all bedrooms would benefit from a reasonable outlook, not unduly restricted by nearby buildings or those waiting to be constructed. The provision of large, full height windows will ensure adequate daylight to rooms, especially those facing north.
- 7.2.9 In summary, it is considered that the proposed building layout generally offers satisfactory privacy relationships with nearby buildings, outlook, daylight, circulation and juxtaposition of living functions within and around the building.
- 7.2.10 Due to the proximity of a number of heavily trafficked routes, noise and air quality assessments would be needed to quantify environmental noise levels and pollutant levels across the site to inform any mitigation measures (glazing/ventilation) that may be required to ensure that occupants enjoy a good standard of residential amenity inside the apartments. It is likely that mechanical ventilation will be required to enable residents to be able to maintain a comfortable environment without opening windows in the summer months.
- 7.2.11 **Subject to confirmation of detailed proposals do Members support the approach towards living conditions for the student accommodation?**

### 7.3 Townscape considerations

- 7.3.1 The application site occupies a prominent location with York Street serving as a major gateway into the City Centre for traffic entering the city from the east. There is little architectural uniformity along this section of York Street and it includes a mix of styles, heights and materials. The most prominent building is the Northern Ballet Centre which is 6 storeys and follows a contemporary design with the York Street frontage dressed in dark cladding and including large projecting balconies. There is no active frontage but a series of street trees helps soften its appearance. Other buildings include several former industrial buildings characterized by red brick columns and large windows, and a circa 1970s red brick office development with curved edges and built in an art deco style. These buildings range from 3 to 4 storeys in height. The application site itself contains a 2 storey red brick building with gable roof. Although the street contains examples of positive buildings, including the Northern Ballet Centre and some of the former industrial buildings on the north side of York Street, much of the street appears rundown – including the application site – which establishes a poor overall impression of the area.
- 7.3.2 The proposal seeks to redevelop the site by constructing a 10 storey building. This will involve demolishing the existing building which the Conservation team have advised does not have sufficient significance to be considered a non-designated heritage asset. The applicant has provided images showing how the new building will sit within the street scene. The Council's Design team consider the scale and massing of the proposed building to be acceptable. Although it would be significantly taller than the

buildings either side, there is a precedence for tall buildings on this stretch of York Street with the Northern Ballet Centre directly opposite reaching a height of 6 storeys. Moreover, the area is undergoing significant change with several large-scale developments under construction or having recently been approved. This will have a significant bearing on the look and feel of the townscape. In this context the scale and height of the proposed development will appear appropriate given its backdrop will be formed of buildings rising to 22 storeys in height.

7.3.3 In oblique and front-on views the massing has been articulated to break up its impact through the adoption of a staggered form, large windows and changes in materials and brick colour. The architectural approach works by creating the appearance of a family of interconnected buildings with a series of distinct elevations which actively address the street. The overall structure is provided by a series of simple and robust brick grids.

7.3.4 Elevations incorporate variation to the depth of the brickwork and different patterns of bonding to form shadow lines and create a degree of visual richness. Deep reveals to window openings will accentuate the solid, robust appearance of the brickwork.

7.3.5 The effectiveness of breaking the building into a series of distinct elements will be partly dependent upon the specification of the materials and quality of the detailing. However, the intention is to employ red and buff light-toned multi-grade brick, selected to complement the characteristic use of brick within the locality.

7.3.6 In terms of active frontages, shared amenity spaces would occupy most of the ground floor facing York Street. The development will therefore provide active frontages at ground floor and introduce a greater amount of natural surveillance over the existing footpaths, when compared to the current use of the site.

7.4.7 This is considered a good quality development and a suitable design response for a prominent site.

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

#### 7.5 Highways considerations

7.5.1 The site is in a sustainable location within Leeds City Centre being within walking distance of a number of nearby bus stops, the bus station and interchanges and the train station. The site is also close to a number of key cycling routes through the city centre, as well as being within walking distance of a number of existing City Centre multi storey car parks. As such the proposals do not provide any on site car parking. However, should parking issues occur in the surrounding residential areas as a result of the proposals (a radius of 800 metres is applied) then a contribution towards implementing Traffic Regulation Orders will be required.

7.5.2 The principle of closing Brick Street to vehicular traffic between York Street and Brussels Street and laying it out as a shared street for walking and cycling has been agreed with the applicant. However, notwithstanding this, Network Rail have stated that there should be no obstruction to their ability to access, inspect and maintain the railway arches and so any arrangement must accommodate this. It is expected that this will be further explored as part of a full application.

7.5.3 All servicing vehicles (including refuse collection) would be expected to use an existing loading bay located 45m to the south along Brick Street. The loading bay would need to be enlarged to accommodate a 2.5m x 11m refuse vehicle. The applicant has

indicated that the loading bay (which could contain 2 car parking bays) would be used for student start and end of term pick-up and drop-off. Although confident 2 spaces will be enough the applicant has stated that if it is not possible to demonstrate that this level of provision is sufficient to meet the operational needs of the proposed development, they will make provision for space/s elsewhere.

7.5.4 The submitted details indicate there will be internally sited secure cycle parking and bin store on the ground floor.

7.5.5 The Council's Highways team have no objection.

## 7.6 Sustainability and Climate Change

7.6.1 Members will be aware that the Council has declared a Climate Emergency. Existing planning policies seek to address the issue of climate change by ensuring that development proposals incorporate measures to reduce the impact of non-renewable resources.

7.6.2 Although at an emerging stage the proposals aim to meet the requirements of planning policies EN1 and EN2 to reduce total predicted carbon dioxide emissions to achieve 20% less than the Building Regulations Target Emission Rate and provide a minimum of 10% of the predicted energy needs of the development from low carbon energy. Full details of the measures that will be employed to address sustainability will come forward as part of any subsequent planning application, such that sustainability measures will be integrated into the detailed design.

## 7.7 Nature and Biodiversity

7.7.1 Core Strategy policy G9 states that developments will need to demonstrate: (i) That there will be an overall net gain for biodiversity commensurate with the scale of the development, including a positive contribution to the habitat network through habitat protection, creation and enhancement, and (ii) The design of new development, including landscape, enhances existing wildlife habitats and provides new areas and opportunities for wildlife, and (iii) That there is no significant adverse impact on the integrity and connectivity of the Leeds Habitat Network.

7.7.2 There is a need to achieve a Biodiversity Net Gain which will require an Ecological Impact Assessment and full Biodiversity Metric calculations to be submitted at full application stage. Although the applicant has indicated that there are no trees or other landscape feature on site this will need evidencing.

## 7.8 Wind

7.8.1 Due to the height of the building the applicant is mindful of the potential impact of the development on the local wind environment and is developing the building massing and architecture in conjunction with input from a wind consultant.

7.8.2 The applicant submitted an Interim Report from Architectural Aerodynamics Ltd. dated 16<sup>th</sup> December 2021. The report assessed an earlier and taller iteration of the pre-application scheme and concluded that the proposed building would not raise concerns at pavement level. Email correspondence from Dr Stanfield of Architectural Aerodynamics also stated that the wind effects on the railway would likely be negligible.

7.8.3 The height of the proposed building has been substantially reduced since 2021 and it will be necessary to submit an updated report at full application stage. As is the usual

approach on receipt of any planning application where wind concerns are raised, upon receipt of a wind study the Council will appoint their own experts to peer review the report's findings. Any required wind mitigation measures should be fully within the demise of the development site and it will not be acceptable to site such measures within or over highway land (including footways) or the Network Rail train line to the rear of the site. As such any wind issues must be fully addressed within the development site.

## 7.9 Open space and green infrastructure

7.9.1 Core Strategy Policy G5 sets out the requirement for provision of open space within city centre developments. This policy includes a site size threshold and applies only to development on sites at least 0.5 hectares in size. The application site is 0.05ha and falls below the threshold and so there is no requirement for open space provision under this policy.

## 7.10 Landscaping

7.10.1 There are not many opportunities to introduce landscaping because of the size and constraints of the application site. Nevertheless, planters are proposed to be integrated between the brick piers which will provide some valuable 'greening' to the edge of the footway. In their submission the applicant has also indicated that the roof terrace will include raised planters and climbing foliage.

7.10.2 The proposal to block off the the northern end of Brick Street to vehicular traffic and create a shared space for cyclists and pedestrians also presents opportunities for additional landscaping and could include planters, trees and seating. However, this would be subject to agreement with Network Rail who have advised that the proposals must not obstruct their ability to inspect, maintain and repair the railway arches. This will require further discussion with the Council and Network Rail as part of a full application.

7.10.3 Full details of all soft and hard landscape proposals will be required to come forward as part of any subsequent planning application.

## 7.11 Accessibility and Inclusion

7.11.1 Accessible entrances will be created and lift access is to be retained to all floors. Full details of the measures to ensure access for all residents, staff and visitors is achieved, will be required as part of any subsequent planning application.

7.11.2 Accessible bedrooms for wheelchair users should be provided within purpose built student accommodation developments at a rate of one wheelchair accessible bedroom provided for every 20 bedrooms, or part thereof, in accordance with Part M of the Building Regulations. The applicant has confirmed the intention is to provide 8 wheelchair accessible bedrooms which exceeds the 1:20 requirement.

## 7.12 Flooding and Drainage

7.12.1 With regard to drainage and flood risk, the site is located within Flood Zone 1 and there have been no records of any recent flooding within the property or adjacent areas. An initial review has also identified there are no other known flood risk which require mitigation and would impact on the proposed development. As the site is at low risk of flood risk the key issue will be providing a drainage solution compliant with the Leeds CC Minimum development Control Standards for Flood Risk.

7.12.2 It is assumed that the surface water will discharge to one of the existing combined sewers located within York Street and this should be verified by means of a survey of the existing site drainage system.

### 7.13 **Conclusion**

7.13.1 Members are asked to note the contents of the report and the presentation. In addition, Members are invited to provide feedback, in particular, in response to the key questions asked in the report above and as follows:

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

**Subject to confirmation of detailed proposals do Members support the approach towards living conditions for the student accommodation?**

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

**Background Papers:** PREAPP/21/00142



# CITY PLANS PANEL

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SCALE : 1/2500



# Site Location

