



Report of the Chief Planning Officer

PLANS PANEL CITY CENTRE

Date: 8 MARCH 2012

Subject: PRE-APPLICATION PRESENTATION – FORMATION OF STUDENT FLATS (501 BEDS IN 77 CLUSTERS) AT 27 BURLEY ROAD, WOODHOUSE (PREAPP/11/00577).

Electoral Wards Affected:
City and Hunslet

No Ward Members consulted
(referred to in report)

Specific Implications For:

Equality and Diversity

Community Cohesion

Narrowing the Gap

RECOMMENDATION: This report is brought to Panel for information. The developer will be asked to present the emerging scheme to allow Members to consider and comment on the proposals.

1.0 INTRODUCTION:

Members will receive a presentation from the developer setting out their proposal to construct a new complex of buildings on the site of the former YTV television studio at 27 Burley Rd to create student accommodation. The building has been vacant since the decision of YTV to centralize its Emmerdale production unit to its main site on Kirkstall Rd. Officers have received a pre-application enquiry regarding this site the details of which are set out below. Members will be asked to comment on the proposal to assist officers in further pre-application discussions.

2.0 SITE AND SURROUNDINGS:

The site currently contains a single building which consists of a part1/part3 storey office element fronting Burley Rd access road (this runs parallel to Burley Rd to the south of the L.C.C. surface car park) and a large single storey shed behind. This sits centrally within a site of approximately 100m x 80m. Around the periphery of the site is an apron of hard standing which enables vehicles to access the entire perimeter of the building. To the east is the Opal 2 student residential building which itself is adjacent the Opal 1 scheme. To the south are the rears of the commercial

properties which front the northern side of Kirkstall Rd and to the west are further low rise commercial units. Immediately in front of the building to the north is the surfaced LCC pay and display car park which means that the buildings are set well back from the main Burley Road carriageway.

3.0 POLICY:

The site is located outside the City Centre boundary as set out in the statutory Unitary Development Plan Review (UDPR) and therefore justification for the loss of employment land has to be made against a number of criteria under Employment Policy E7. Where the case for the loss of employment land can be made, residential development is the favoured land use.

UDPR policy H15A states that the City Council will work with the universities and accommodation providers to promote student housing where it meets the following criteria:

- Good connections by public transport to the universities or be close enough to enable easy travel by foot or cycle
- Attractive to students to live and be of sufficient scale to form a viable student community either in themselves or in association with other developments
- Be well integrated in to the surrounding area in terms of scale character and associated services and facilities
- Contribute directly to the regeneration of the surrounding area, preferably as part of comprehensive planning proposals
- Not unacceptably affect the quality, quantity or variety of the local housing stock

This site is also covered by advice contained within the non-statutory Kirkstall Road Renaissance Area Planning Framework where it is included within the 'Media Village' area. This is characterized as 'an employment area dominated by media' where employment uses will be favoured. However it is considered no longer necessary or appropriate to apply the requirement for media-related uses given the fact that YTV has reduced its presence and there are no other significant media operators in the area. This document also identifies that the neighbouring character area to the east ('City Heights') contains a number of 'high density cluster flats including purpose built student accommodation *and therefore* the remaining potential development sites should only be developed for a non-residential purpose'. The current proposal site is outside this character area and therefore not subject to this restriction.

The Core Strategy, which is currently at consultation draft stage, states that development proposals for purpose built student accommodation will be controlled:

- To help extend the supply of student accommodation taking pressure off the need for private housing to be used,
- To avoid the loss of existing housing suitable for family occupation,
- To avoid excessive concentrations of student accommodation (in a single development or in combination with existing accommodation) which would undermine the balance and wellbeing of communities,
- To avoid locations which are not easily accessible to the Universities by foot or public transport or which would generate excessive footfall through quiet residential areas.

4.0 HISTORY OF NEGOTIATIONS

The applicant approached officers late in 2011 and held an introductory meeting. Since then a further meeting has been held to discuss massing, the types of elevational treatment which may be appropriate and highways matters. Local residents have previously raised objections to student schemes further to the east and therefore the applicant held a public drop-in session at the Swarthmore Centre in Woodhouse Sq (16th Feb 2012) to inform local residents of the proposal and receive any representations. At the time of writing this report officers had not seen the results of this exercise, however, the applicant will be asked to provide this as part of their presentation.

5.0 PROPOSAL

It is proposed to create 501 student bed spaces in 77 cluster flats. The flats are provided in a mix of unit sizes ranging from four to seven bedrooms. These are located within 3 buildings which sit clear of the boundaries to allow sufficient distance to the neighbouring buildings to protect their amenity and allow visual permeability and roughly form a 'figure 8' layout. This creates two landscaped courtyards which would each have internal dimensions of approx 21m x 30m (630sqm). As a comparator, the neighbouring Opal 2 building has a single courtyard of 12m x 40m (480sqm) surrounded by buildings of 6-10 storeys, Opal 1's central space is irregular with sides of 19m, 32m, 38m and 39m (1,000sqm) with building heights of 10-13 storeys and the new student scheme at Charles Morris Halls is again irregular in plan and is 25m widening to 38m over an average length of 40m (1,280sqm) having one open side with the buildings being 5+1 and 6+1 storeys.

The building heights are proposed to be 6 storeys at the eastern end adjacent Opal 2, stepping down to 5 and then 4 storeys at the western end. The intention is for this to act as a transition from the taller buildings closer to the city centre down to the lower commercial units to the west. The central block which divides the two courtyard spaces would be 5 storeys including a ground floor undercroft containing open sided cycle parking. A gym with nurse consultation room, a residents only coffee bar and restaurant fronting Burley Rd (but with no direct access to the street) and a laundry, will all be provided on site and be contained within a secure environment.

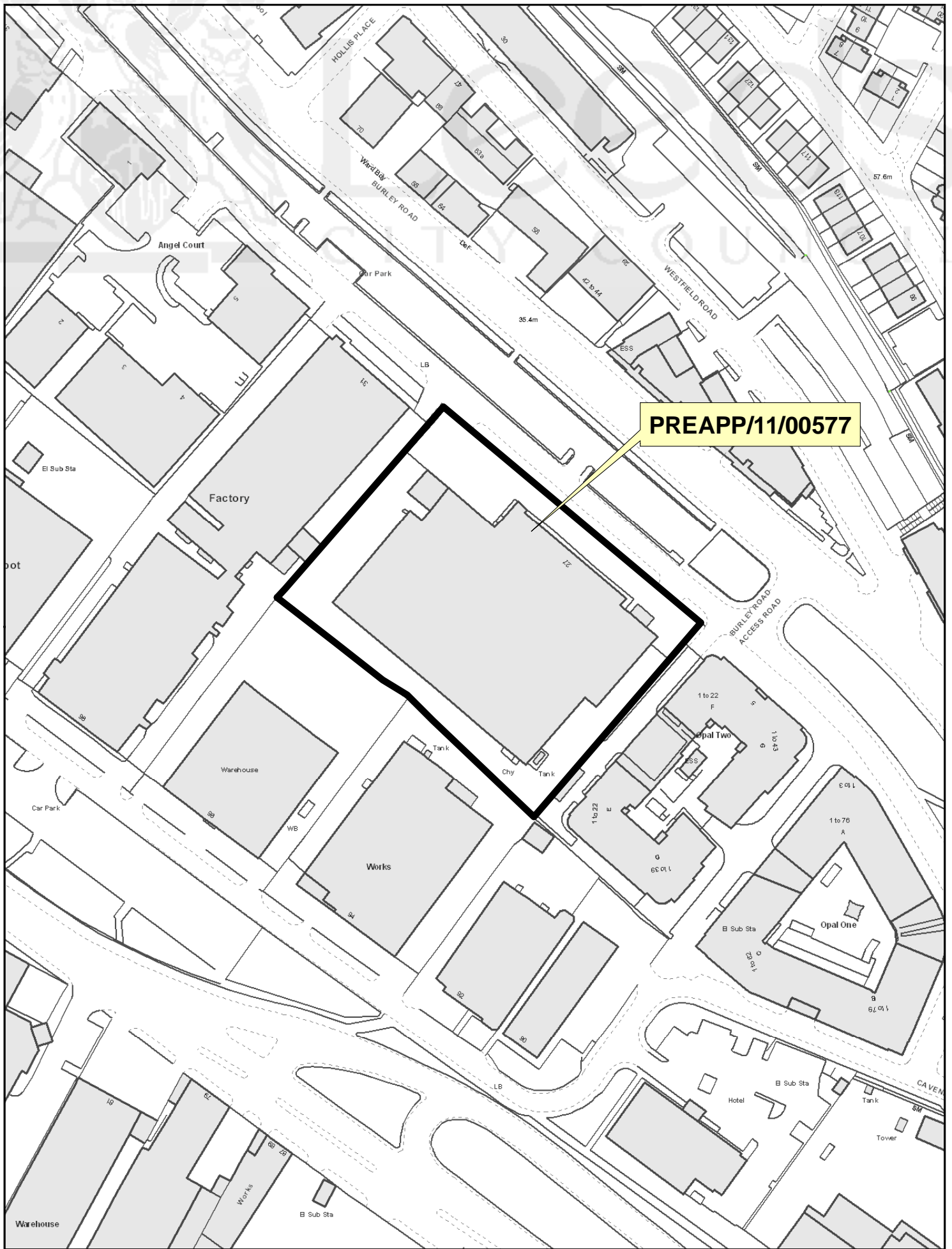
Vehicular access to the site would be from the Burley Rd access road at the north-western corner leading to a hard surfaced area used to access the motorcycle (approx 15 spaces) and cycle storage areas (approx 200 spaces). It is also intended that this area be used at times when students are arriving and leaving at either end of term for loading and unloading. There would be no other vehicle parking proposed on the site other than the ability to provide disabled parking bays. Refuse collections and other servicing would take place from a lay-by which it is proposed to be located on the Burley Rd access road.

6.0 ISSUES

Members are asked to consider the following matters:

- i. Is the principle of the redevelopment of this site for student accommodation acceptable having particular regard to the criteria identified in UDPR policy 15A set out above?
- ii. Is the stepped nature of the design acceptable and does it relate well to the surrounding buildings?
- iii. Is the plan layout of the complex acceptable particularly the size of the courtyards?

- iv. Is the lack of car parking and use of the side area for student arrivals/departures at the start and end of each term acceptable?
- v. Are the motorcycle/cycle parking and servicing arrangements acceptable?



PREAPP/11/00577

CITY CENTRE PLANS PANEL