



Report of the Chief Planning Officer

PLANS PANEL CITY CENTRE

Date: 5 July 2012

Subject: PRE-APPLICATION Reference PREAPP/12/00581 – Proposal for office development at Sovereign Street, Leeds

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's representative will be asked to present the emerging scheme to allow Members to consider and comment on the proposals.

1.0 INTRODUCTION:

1.1 This pre-application presentation relates to the proposed development of a new office building at Sovereign Street, Leeds. The proposals will be presented to Panel by the developer's architects, Scott Brownrigg, to allow Members to comment on the evolving scheme and raise any issues, prior to the intended submission of a full planning application later in the year.

2.0 SITE AND SURROUNDINGS:

2.1 The Sovereign Street site is located at the heart of Leeds City Centre, close to Leeds Railway Station and the River Aire. The whole development site comprises 1.16 hectares and is currently used as a surface car park. It sits directly to the south and west of the City Centre Conservation Area within the Riverside Area, and has remained undeveloped since the demolition of the former Queens Hall in 1989, despite gaining planning permission for a mixed use redevelopment in 1995, and being the subject of pre-application discussions for the Criterion Place 'Kissing Towers' scheme from 2003-2007.

- 2.2 The surrounding area is a mixture of uses including multi-storey car parking, residential, offices, hotel and supporting restaurant and retail uses. The site is allocated as a development site in the adopted Unitary Development Plan Review (UDP) as Proposal Area 21, which forms part of the designated Riverside Area. This states that the site should be principally developed for office use, with scope for ancillary retail, food and drink and leisure uses. This policy highlights the need for north-south pedestrian routes through the site, with a central public space, and a prestige office frontage visible from Neville Street.
- 2.3 The Council adopted the Sovereign Street Planning Statement in July 2011. It identified three indicative building plots A, B, and C, as well as an area of greenspace (see attached plan). The building plots have been sited in order to balance objectives to enhance the key views into the site from the Conservation Area in the east, from Neville Street in the west, take account of existing and potential future pedestrian connections from east to west and north to south, and the requirement to deliver and maintain a significant viable greenspace and pedestrian/cycle improvements to connect to the South Bank.
- 2.4 Plot A is the subject of this pre-application presentation. The site area is some 0.29 hectare. The plot is located at the south west corner of the site, bounded by Pitt Row, Sovereign Street, and the line of the underground goit, where the plot edge meets the proposed greenspace.
- 2.5 The site is identified in the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment in flood risk zone 3, however, more detailed topographical surveys have indicated that the site lies within zone 2.

3.0 PROPOSAL

- 3.1 The proposal is for a 4 storey office building (6888 square metres). The office areas would be arranged around a central atrium covered by a glass roof. Above this there would be a plant area, roof terrace and sedum roof.
- 3.2 Car parking and servicing would be accessed from Pitt Row, with 39 car parking spaces proposed at basement level. Cycle storage and showers would also be located in the basement.
- 3.3 The main entrance of the building would be accessed from Sovereign Street, with ramps to take account of the 1m raised floor level for flood risk reasons. A second entrance would allow access for users of the building to and from the new greenspace through the reception area.
- 3.4 The building would meet the BREEAM 'Excellent' sustainability target, and employ coloured glazed fins and angled facades to give solar shading to a predominantly glazed building.

4.0 HISTORY OF NEGOTIATIONS

- 4.1 The Sovereign Street site has been identified as a development site since the early 1990s, and in 1995 Leeds Development Corporation granted planning permission for a large mixed use development, of which only the multi-storey car park was built. The adoption of the UDP in 2001, and its review in 2006, formalised the site's allocation in the statutory development plan. In 2002 an informal Planning and Development Brief was adopted for the site, which guided the pre-application

discussions with Simons Estates and Ian Simpson Architects regarding the Criterion Place 'Kissing Towers' mixed use scheme. Following the cancellation of this scheme, the site was identified by the Council's Executive Board as a potential site for new buildings and a greenspace, and following public consultation in 2011, a revised Sovereign Street Planning Statement incorporating that vision was adopted. Plans Panel (City Centre) discussed the updated Sovereign Street Planning Statement in March and October 2011. In March 2011, Plans Panel also discussed the early design of this building, and were generally supportive of the design concept at that stage. The developer and their team have recently commenced more detailed pre-application discussions with officers.

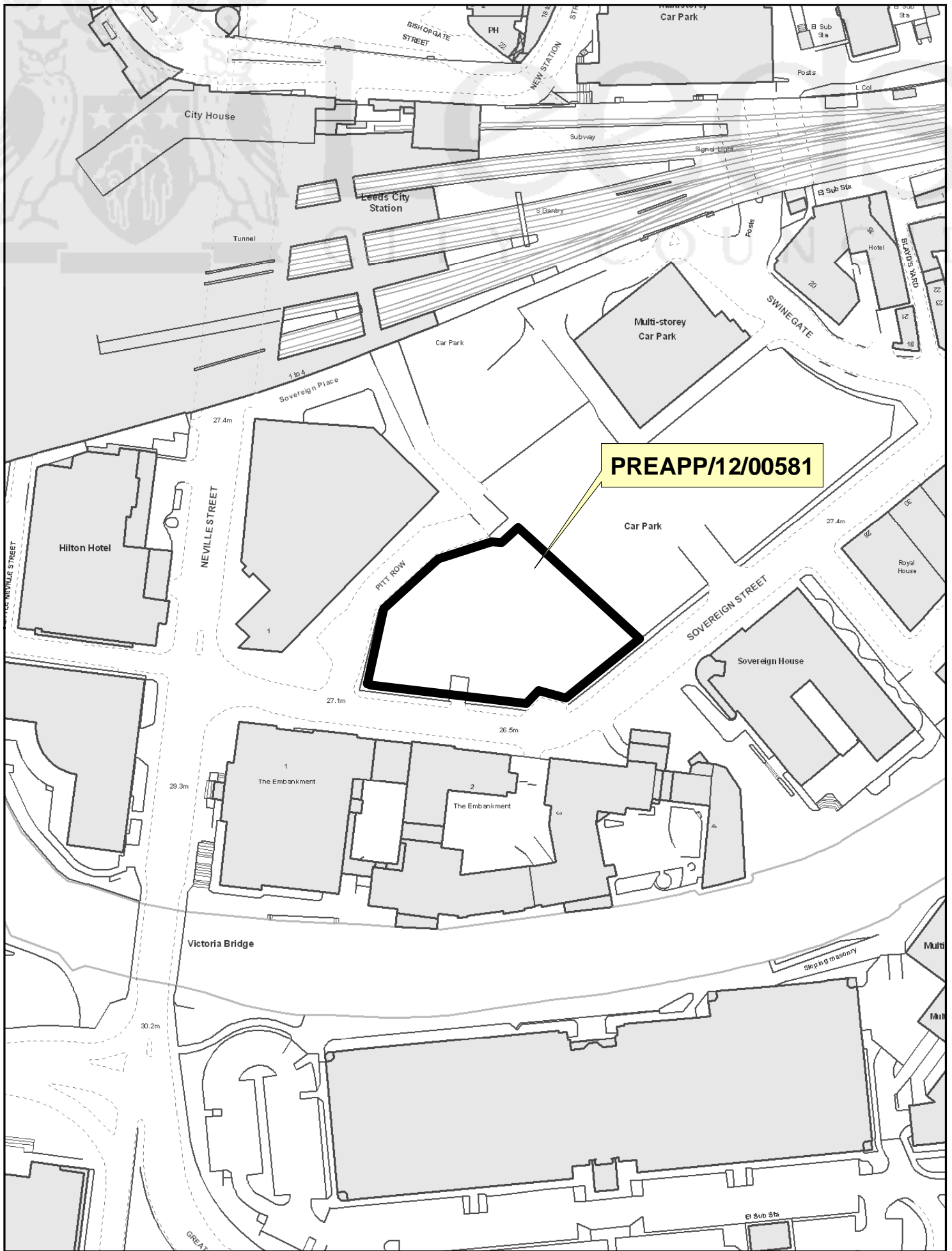
5.0 ISSUES

Members are asked to consider the following matters in particular:

- 5.1 Is the general form of the building acceptable?
- 5.2 Does the building address Sovereign Street and the new greenspace successfully?
- 5.3 Is the rooftop plant resolved successfully within the roof-form of the building?

Background Papers:

Sovereign Street Planning Statement July 2011



CITY CENTRE PLANS PANEL

