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## REPORT OF THE CHIEF PLANNING OFFICER

### PLANS PANEL WEST

DATE : 19<sup>th</sup> APRIL 2007

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**SUBJECT: PLANNING APPLICATION 24/572/05/OT**

**NEW DISTRICT CENTRE COMPRISING OF A MIXED USE DEVELOPMENT WITH RETAIL, RESIDENTIAL, OFFICES, COMMUNITY FACILITIES, PUBLIC OPEN SPACES, PARKING AND ACCESSES AND INCORPORATING A LIFT BUILDING – KIRKSTALL LANE, KIRKSTALL HILL, BEECROFT STREET AND COMMERCIAL ROAD, KIRKSTALL.**

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**Electoral Wards Affected :**

Kirkstall

**Specific Implications For :**

Ethnic Minorities

Women

Disabled People

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### RECOMMENDATION

**Members are requested to note the contents of this update report on progress with the application for a new District Centre at Kirkstall and to now indicate their support for the outline application to redevelop the District Centre and to defer and delegate approval to the Chief Planning Officer subject to appropriate conditions and a Section 106 agreement in consultation with Ward Members.**

### 1.0 Introduction:

- 1.1 Plans for the redevelopment of this site were received in November 2005 and reported to Panel on 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2006. The application was subsequently amended so the proposed layout could accommodate a Lift building for the PCT with a Joint Service Centre (JSC) on the upper part of the site. The revised application was reported to Members at the Plans Panel West meeting on 30<sup>th</sup> November 2006, following an extended site visit and a presentation of the proposals.

- 1.2 Members commented on a number of issues at that meeting which are dealt with further in this report. Members considered at that time that whilst the scheme looked acceptable in principle the overarching problem remaining was the serious implications on the immediate highway network and the knock-on effects on the wider network coupled with concerns that the usual level of affordable housing could not be achieved on the site. Members accepted that the scheme could deliver significant benefits to the area but that further work was required particularly regarding highway concerns. This report provides a further update on progress since the November meeting and recommends that the stage has now been reached when a resolution to approve the scheme in outline can be made subject to the necessary conditions and legal agreement.
- 1.3 Substantial pre-application discussions and community consultation was carried out at the pre-application stage (including public exhibitions in September 2003 and October 2005) where a high level of public support (95%) was received. The proposed amendments were also subject to further public consultation at an exhibition on 24<sup>th</sup> July 2006.
- 1.4 The site forms part of Kirkstall Centre, a designated town centre in the adopted Leeds Unitary Development Plan and is located approximated 4km west of the City Centre. The application site comprises 3.6 hectares of previously developed land and offers a substantial opportunity for high quality development on a brownfield site within the main urban area. The site is complex and has abnormal development costs due to the topography of the area and the resulting site levels which are separated by several large retaining walls.
- 1.5 To aid the consideration of the application at Panel a briefing pack prepared by the applicants was sent to all Panel Members and Ward Members just before the Easter weekend giving further information and dealing with the main issues that the application raises.

## **2.0 Proposal:**

- 2.1 In summary, the application seeks outline permission for a mixed use development broadly comprising the following:
- A series of new public spaces through the site from Kirkstall Road/Commercial Road (A65) to Kirkstall Hill;
  - Retail premises on several levels through the site providing a range of high street and smaller local shops;
  - Residential apartments (comprising a mix of studios, one bed, two bed and three bedroom apartments, key worker and managed student accommodation) with associated amenity space;
  - Restaurant, café/bar premises;
  - Nursery and health club/gymnasium;
  - Local amenities such as a library, chemist, post office and Postal Sports Association club (formally known as Post Office Workers Club - POWC).
  - Provision for a building providing accommodation for a Leeds City Council Joint Service Centre and health care facilities for the local PCT.

- Car parking hidden underneath the development and within a multi story car park (MSCP) accessed off Kirkstall Lane and Beecroft Street respectively.
  - Extensive through routes for pedestrians including links to adjacent bus stops.
  - Hard and soft landscaping, environmental enhancements and improvements.
- 2.2 The scheme incorporates 9 buildings across the site (Blocks A to J). Approval is sought for details of access, siting and design for blocks A to F, and for access only to blocks G, H and J. Matters of external appearance and landscaping have been reserved for future consideration.
- 2.3 The application proposes the creation of a new district centre for Kirkstall within the quadrant of land formed by Commercial Road (A65) to the west, Kirkstall Lane to the north, Kirkstall Hill to the east and Beecroft Street to the south. Members have previously visited the site and noted the importance of this development for Kirkstall, representing to many the historical heart of the district centre, and the need for the regeneration of the area given its present state and condition. The new district centre will bring social and economic improvements to the locality and for local people. It will also seek to retain many important local facilities such as the post office, chemist, library, and Postal Sports Association Club in new and improved premises. The application proposes an increase in commercial floor space in order to provide a range and scale of premises suitable to meet modern retailer's requirements which are necessary to create an economically sustainable retail development. This will provide local people with real choice and help to reduce shopping trips to locations further afield.

Throughout the development of this scheme the aim has been to provide an integrated design and mix of uses on the site so that it can operate successfully as a District centre in terms of the range of services which are provided with good accessibility and access to a range of users and to a high quality with a sense of place and good public realm. In summary the proposals seek to provide a mixed use, vibrant and sustainable district centre in its original location to meet local needs in Kirkstall.

The following sections describe in more detail the content of the proposal.

## 2.4 Open Space

The scheme will provide approximately 1.9 hectares of public open space to be provided as follows:

- Kirkstall Square will be a traditional town square for Kirkstall, accommodating large pedestrian priority areas, high quality landscaping and low density car parking. It will also provide a much need space for Sunday markets etc.
- Tannery Square (3,943m<sup>2</sup>) provides a large traffic free area surrounded by active retail, bar/cafes and leisure uses. This area and Kirkstall Steps, linking it directly to the main retail in Kirkstall Square will be the hub of the community. Active ground floor uses with residential accommodation above will provide a high level of natural surveillance ensuring a safe and secure environment.
- The residential garden courtyard (3,067m<sup>2</sup>) accessed from Tannery Square, Beecroft Street and Kirkstall Hill will provide further public space and residential amenity space. The area is predominantly surrounded by residential properties and has been designed to be semi-private with less activity and quieter than Tannery Square;

- The route through the site from the Kirkstall steps (1,600m<sup>2</sup>) to the main retail terrace/Kirkstall Square and Tannery Square will provide a large and prominent area of usable public open space with appropriate seating areas.

The delivery of high quality public open space forms an important and large part of the proposed development and is likely to cost approximately £1.7million.

## **2.5 Residential**

The application proposes to provide 669 residential units spread throughout all the blocks, except for block G. The exact mix of residential units is a matter to be determined at the reserved matters stage, however the outline scheme has been designed to accommodate a range of studios, one bed, two bed and three bed flats. These will mainly be provided above the retail and commercial units.

Of the 669 new dwellings, approximately 25% will be key worker and/or managed purpose built student accommodation. The student accommodation will help to relieve pressure on existing local properties and the housing market by releasing properties for local people and families. It will also help prevent problems that have arisen in other areas with a proliferation of unmanaged student properties, such as vacant properties outside of term times; lack of community integration; property neglect and pressure on parking.

The key worker housing will be made available to those groups eligible for the Housing Corporation funded Key Worker Living Programme which broadly incorporates the following employees within the public sector:

- Nurses and other NHS clinical staff;
- Teachers in school and in further education and sixth form colleges;
- Police officers and civilian staff in police forces;
- Prison and probation service staff;
- Social workers, educational psychologist and occupational therapists employed by local Councils;
- Junior fire officers

It is envisaged that the vast majority of these units will be rented to their ultimate occupiers.

In order to achieve a balanced community, a proportion of the residential accommodation (10.5% by floor area) will be for elderly residents to be provided as sheltered accommodation or extra care dwellings.

The Council have received a detailed financial appraisal of the proposed scheme which provides a breakdown of all the associated development costs. The appraisal concludes, that, due to the abnormal development costs resulting from the comprehensive nature of the development set over a steeply sloping site and including significantly new public realm at the heart of the public community, it is not possible to include any traditional affordable housing (subsidised sale or transfer of units to a registered social landlord). The quantum of these abnormal costs total about £15m. This is approximately equivalent to the value of the discount from open market to that which would be achieved if 25% of the proposed housing was transferred to a registered social landlord.

However, the range and size of the proposed properties will ensure prices to attract a wide cross section of the community and especially first time buyers.

## **2.6 Retail**

The application proposes 12,410m<sup>2</sup> of retail floor space to be provided throughout the site. The majority of the retail units will be accessed from the new town square (Kirkstall Square) in blocks A, G, H and J, offering high street style retail and some larger units. Blocks B and C also propose retail frontage at street level onto Kirkstall Lane and Kirkstall Hill in order to provide an active frontage which will complement the existing neighbourhood retail at the Morris Lane junction. The proposals include a restaurant and café/bar restaurants surrounding the public realm between blocks A,B and D. In order to provide a balance of town centre uses, the scheme also incorporates a gym, nursery and the relocation of the Post Office Workers Club (POWC). The precise mix of these uses will be determined at a later stage, however, outline permission is sought for a total of 13,746m<sup>2</sup> of retail and commercial floor space.

## **2.7 Car parking and vehicular access**

Access to the site will primarily be taken from Beecroft Street. There are a number of access points:

The first provides access to the undercroft service area that serves the retail terrace in Blocks H & J above. This point can also provide for vehicular egress outside of service hours.

The second access point from Beecroft Street provides the main access and egress on to the main town square and allows for service vehicles using the site outside of trading hours. The access point at the top of Beecroft Street gives access/egress to the 179 spaces hidden beneath the residential garden courtyard and also to the MSCP.

There is a left-in only access proposed from Kirkstall Lane to the undercroft parking, beneath the Kirkstall town square and a combined service and vehicular exit/egress onto Beecroft Street from the lower level nearest the junction with the A65. Emergency and refuse access points are included from Beecroft Street.

The application proposes approximately 900 parking spaces. These are spread across the site: 179 underground spaces hidden at the top part of the site, 342 in the MSCP and the remaining 379 will be located as undercroft parking at the lower end of the site with some additional low density spaces in the town square.

It is proposed that the parking will operate in accordance with the following principles:

- Shoppers will predominantly use the access from Kirkstall Lane, therefore using the 379 spaces below the main retail terrace and on the main retail site itself which can also be accessed/egressed from Beecroft Street. Spaces are likely to be restricted to short stay parking and drop off/pick up;

- During the week, the employees of the PCT/JSC will use the parking within the MSCP which is accessed off Beecroft Street. At the weekend, when retail parking demand is at its highest the spaces will also be available for shoppers;
- Visitors to the LIFT are intended to use the MSCP but will also be able to use spaces beneath and on the main retail terrace;
- Residents will utilise approximately 179 spaces beneath the residential blocks and also 342 spaces in the MSCP. The inclusion of an element of managed student and/or key worker accommodation will assist in minimising the car parking spaces required by residents, and on average 87% of all residential units (after the student/key worker element) are provided with a parking space.

The development will be supported a parking strategy which will form part of a detailed management plan. This strategy will include a number of measures to manage the increase in traffic in and around the site.

## 2.8 Highway improvements

The cost of the proposed highways improvements are estimated at £1.8million and are set out in detail in the submitted Transport Assessment and associated supplementary submissions. These can be summarised as follows:

- Widening of the existing Kirkstall Lane/Kirkstall Hill/Morris Lane signalised junction including introduction of dedicated pedestrian crossing facilities;
- Widening and the signalisation of Beecroft Street/Kirkstall Hill priority junction including the introduction of a right turn lane into Beecroft Street and a pedestrian island;
- Widening of Kirkstall Hill to provide a right turning lane at the junction with Beecroft Street/Kirkstall Lane/Morris Lane;
- Widening of the footpath adjacent to the development on Kirkstall Hill and opening up the corner of Kirkstall Hill and Kirkstall Lane to facilitate pedestrian access
- Provision of signalised junction improvements at the Beecroft Street/A65 Commercial Road junction and inclusion of a new safety refuge for pedestrian crossing;
- Improvement to three bus stops surrounding the site with new shelters and real time information.

The proposed alterations to the Kirkstall Hill/Kirkstall Lane junction have been the subject of further discussions between the applicant's highway consultants and the Highways department. Amended plans were agreed and formally submitted on 16 February and the public consultation period for these expired on 27<sup>th</sup> March.

These plans also further revised the arrangement of the Beecroft Street/A65 junction. These works have been designed so as not to prejudice the Council's improvement plans for the A65 Kirkstall Road/Commercial Road and Quality Bus Initiative scheme (QBI) and incorporate the inclusion of a new left turning lane from the A65 into Beecroft Street.

To bring the overall impact of development within acceptable bounds, the applicants have agreed to further limitations being placed during the initial phase of development in the form of an undertaking that 75% of the retail floorspace will not open before 9.30am Mondays to Fridays and that the top two levels of the MSCP (124 spaces) will not be permitted to be used Mondays to Fridays with the use of the top level only not being permitted on Saturdays. These restrictions will remain in

place until the A65 QBI scheme is introduced achieving two city bound lanes through the A65 gyratory.

## **2.9 Joint Service Centre**

There have been discussions over an extensive period about the siting and delivery of the LIFT building, which will accommodate the Councils JSC and a PCT facility. During these discussions it became apparent that the LIFT building could not be accommodated on the lower site due to ownership issues which could not realistically be resolved during the JSC's delivery timeframe. As a consequence the amended application excluded the siting of block G so that the LIFT building could be accommodated in this position on the upper part of the site, adjacent to the proposed multi story car park (Block F). The provision of the JSC and PCT could complement the retail provision and encourage visitors to the District Centre.

The JSC element will be able to provide new customer services and counter facilities providing a range of services to people in Kirkstall. The location of the JSC in the heart of the development will centralise facilities in a location very accessible to the community on foot, by public transport or by car.

The precise location of the JSC and PCT element of the scheme is still under consideration. Recently the feasibility of delivering the JSC on Council owned land on the A65 frontage has been examined in more detail as a preferred option by the Council to see if this could be delivered within the urban design framework for the rest of the site. The Council and applicant are exploring how an integrated JSC building can be delivered on the lower part of the site.

This application allows the flexibility for the JSC and PCT to come forward in either location, either jointly or separately.

## **3.0 Site and Surroundings:**

- 3.1 The site is some 3.60 ha in size. The site is previously developed site and is therefore classed as a brownfield site. The majority of the site lies within the designated S2 centre in the adopted UDP although the former Waide factory and adjacent industrial buildings lie outside the designated centre (i.e. blocks B,C,D, E and F on the site layout).
- 3.2 The site has a number of vacant and derelict buildings with some uses still on site which include a pharmacy, office, library, bookmakers, working man's club and public house. Previous development on the site included the Waide Factory - a former tannery (now demolished) and a former Kwik Save (now vacant).
- 3.3 The existing vehicular access to the site is from Beecroft Street and Kirkstall Hill with pedestrian accesses from all boundaries. There is an existing right of way on the site from Kirkstall Hill to Beecroft Street.
- 3.4 The sites topography is such that the land rises steeply from Commercial Road to both the top of Beecroft Street and the junction of Kirkstall Hill and Lane. The site rises 17m vertically up Kirkstall Lane and a further 12m up Kirkstall Hill, generating a site cross fall of 1 in 7.6.

3.5 There are a variety of land uses in the vicinity, including retail, commercial, residential, leisure, recreation, social, health and community and there are a variety and range of buildings of differing size, age, design and scale.

3.6 The S2 centre at Kirkstall includes development on the other side of Kirkstall Lane and existing retail development on the other side of the A65 ( Morrisons and BHS sites ). There are a good number of bus routes serving the site and Headingley Railway Station is within easy walking distance.

#### **4.0 Relevant Planning History:**

4.1 24/198/00/RE – approved in November 2000 for a maximum of 2,787 sq m of non food retail floorspace on the site of the former Wade factory (i.e. a D.I.Y store), which lies outside the S2 centre boundary (expired in Nov 2003).

4.2 24/379/03/FU – variation of Condition 2 to 24/198/00/RE to allow longer period for submission of reserved matters approved Sep 2003 (expired Nov 2005)

4.3 24/341/05/FU – variation of Condition 1 of 24/379/03/FU to allow for longer period for submission of reserved matters approved Sep 2005 (expires 22 Nov 2007)

#### **5.0 Consultation Responses**

5.1 None of the consultation responses in relation to this application preclude the development proceeding in principle.

#### **6.0 Public/Local Response:**

6.1 Espalier has undertaken extensive public consultation, engaging local residents, Ward Members, and local businesses and community organisations since September 2003.

6.2 The consultation process involved:-

- Two local exhibitions
- Meetings with three local resident groups
- Meetings with Ward members
- Meetings with LCC Officers
- Meetings with PCT and LIFT representatives
- Panel Members site visit and presentation.

6.3 Prior to the submission of the revised proposal at the end of July 2006 a Public exhibition was held at Milford Sports Centre. Ward members have been briefed on the amended scheme and have provided comments which have been passed onto the developer.

6.4 2 letters of representation have been received to the application so far. The feedback from the latest public consultation shows that 67 people attended and 60% provided feedback of which the overwhelming majority were positive with many comments wanting to see redevelopment commence as soon as possible. 95% of



responses expressed support or had a neutral view of the amended scheme. Only two residents responded negatively based on the scale of the proposals.

- 6.5 The most recent consultation following the submission of revised junction designs has not resulted in any letters of representation.

## 7.0 Policy Context:

### 7.1 National policy context

PPS1 - Delivering Sustainable Development

PPS3 - Housing

PPS6 - Planning for Town Centres

PPG13 – Transport

PPS1 sets out the Government's objectives for the planning system. Good planning ensures we get the right development in the right place and at the right time.

Sustainable Development is the core principle underpinning planning. Planning should facilitate and promote sustainable and inclusive patterns of urban development by:

- making suitable land available for development in line with economic, social and environmental objectives to improve people's quality of life;
- contributing to sustainable economic development;
- protecting and enhancing existing communities;
- ensuring high quality development through good and inclusive design; and
- ensuring that development supports existing communities and contributes to the creation of safe, sustainable, liveable and mixed communities with good access to jobs and key services for all members of the community.

PPS1 also sets out that community involvement is an essential element in delivering sustainable development and creating sustainable and safe communities.

In delivering sustainable development the general approach set out in PPS1 is that;

- developments that attract a large number of people especially retail, leisure and offices should be focussed in existing centres to promote their vitality and viability, social inclusion and more sustainable patterns of development
- the more efficient use of land should be promoted through high density mixed use development, and the use of suitably located, previously-developed land and buildings
- the need to travel should be reduced and accessible public transport provision should be encouraged to secure more sustainable patterns of transport development. Developments should be focussed in existing centres and near to major public transport interchanges
- mixed use developments should be promoted for locations that allow the creation of linkage between different uses and can thereby create more vibrant places.

PPS3 sets out the key Government housing policy goals and is a material consideration in determining planning applications from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2007;

- to achieve a wide choice of high quality homes, both affordable and market housing, to address the requirements of the community

- to widen opportunities for home ownership and ensure high quality housing for those who cannot afford market housing
- to improve affordability across the housing market
- to create sustainable, inclusive, mixed communities in all areas.

The planning systems should therefore deliver high quality housing that is well designed, and to a high standard, a mix of housing, both market and affordable, particularly in terms of tenure and price, to support a wide variety of households in all areas, housing development in suitable locations which offer a good range of community facilities with good access to jobs, key services and infrastructure, and which makes efficient and effective use of land, including re-use of previously-developed land, where appropriate.

PPS6 sets out the Government's key objectives for town centres to promote their vitality and viability by;

- planning for the growth and development of existing centres; and
- providing and enhancing existing centres, by focussing development in such centres and encouraging a wide range of services in a good environment, accessible to all.

PPG13 sets out to integrate planning and transport at the national, regional and local level to:

- promote more sustainable transport choices for both people and for moving freight
- promote accessibility to jobs, shopping, leisure facilities and services by public transport, walking and cycling, and reduce the need to travel, especially by car.

## 7.2 Adopted Review UDP

The lower part of the site is within the designated S2 centre of Kirkstall.

The following policies in the adopted Review UDP are relevant to the determination of this application;

SA5 – availability of shops to give access to all sections of the community  
 SP7 – priority given to maintenance and enhancement of City and town centres  
 S2 – vitality and viability of town centres to be maintained and enhanced  
 S3 – enhancement and maintenance of town centres  
 S3a – priority given to refurbishment and enhancement of Kirkstall  
 E7 – redevelopment of industrial sites  
 BD5 – new buildings design consideration given to own amenity and surroundings  
 H4 – provision of housing on non allocated sites  
 H9 – balanced provision of housing  
 H11 / H12 – affordable housing  
 H15 – Area Of Housing Mix  
 N2 / N4 – greenspace requirements for new housing schemes  
 N12 – principles of urban design  
 N13 – high quality building design  
 T2 – development capable of being served by highway network  
 T24 – car parking guidelines

GP5 – detailed planning considerations should be resolved including design and loss of amenity

## 8.0 Main Issues to be addressed

- Principle of the Development
- Impact upon the local highway network
- Scale and design of scheme
- Public realm and pedestrian linkages
- Mix of housing
- JSC/LIFT
- Quality
- Planning Benefits

## 9.0 Appraisal

### 9.1 Principle of the development

The principle of redeveloping the District Centre is fully in accordance with Government guidance in PPS1, PPS3 and PPS6, and has strong policy backing in the adopted Review UDP through Strategic Aim SA5, Strategic Policy SP7 and policies S2, S3 and S3a. (Priority given to refurbishment and enhancement of Kirkstall). **Members fully accepted at the meeting in November 2006 that a new District Centre for Kirkstall should and must be delivered.** The existing centre is in a poor state, in great need of regeneration to provide a new focus and heart for the local community. Whilst this scheme is high density it is necessarily so to create the critical mass to deliver the full range of facilities required, and still be profitable given the high costs involved in delivering this site and bringing it forward. This is a key brownfield site in a very sustainable location with good public transport connections. Whilst part of the site is outside the S2 centre there is an extant permission for a DIY retail use on the former Wade site which is material. The scheme proposes a mix of uses across the site with substantial residential on the upper part which is considered to fully accord with PPS3 and in locational terms is also supported by PPS1, PPS6 and PPG13. The principle of the development is therefore considered to be fully acceptable and should be supported. In addition, substantial community consultation has taken place to get to this stage with local views taken into account in developing the scheme, which is fully in line with Government guidance in PPS1 and the City Council's approved Statement of Community Involvement.

9.2 Impact on local highway network – the scheme is a high density development including a mix of uses, in a sustainable location with regards accessibility to the local community with good public transport links. The A65 QBI scheme is proposed for Commercial Road/Kirkstall Road and Government funding has relatively recently been given for this.

The proposed development would be a significant trip generator across all modes with increases in pedestrians, public transport use, cycling and private car use from a site that at present has very little activity. The Kirkstall gyratory experiences varying levels of congestion during peak hours and at the weekend. It is inevitable that a scheme of this size will have some impact on the operation of the gyratory. The Transport Assessment process has shown that as originally proposed and presented

to Panel in November 2006 the scheme was unacceptable to highways (and Panel) because of potential major problems with:

- Blocking back and gridlock of the gyratory
- Extended queue lengths on all approaches to the gyratory
- Access / egress issues of the site itself

Since the November 2006 Panel significant work has been undertaken by officers and the Developers to bring about a mutually acceptable solution. This has been approached from a number of angles including:

- Infrastructure improvements (off site junction improvements), pre QBI and post QBI
- Restrictions in use / reduction in trip generation (with a Phased approach)
- Green Travel Plan measures

Subject to agreement on finalised Travel Plan and restrictions on car parking, a S106 Agreement and a number of conditions, Highways would now be able to support the proposed development.

#### Infrastructure improvements

Junction improvement works are proposed at three junctions adjacent to the site to allow for safe and efficient access to the site and where possible a nil detriment impact for other traffic. No attempt has been made to increase capacity for commuting traffic.

#### Kirkstall Hill / Kirkstall Lane / Morris Lane

Congestion at this junction is already severe at certain times with queuing east back to Queenswood Drive not uncommon and delays on the radial route in and out of the City Centre. Without improvements the proposed development would significantly add to these queues. The existing junction has full pedestrian facilities which operate on an 'all red' phasing – ie when ever a push button is pressed all approaches to the junction get a red signal at a certain stage within the signal cycle to allow pedestrians to cross.

The proposed improvements remove this 'all red' phase by introducing central islands on Kirkstall Hill and Kirkstall Lane creating two 'staggered' crossing points on these arms. The pedestrian facilities on all arms can then be operated independently of each other reducing overall red time and allowing development traffic to be accommodated. The Transyt modelling shows approximately nil detriment – ie delay will remain similar to now but access to the new District Centre is significantly improved.

The impact on pedestrian delay would vary depending on which arm/s is being crossed and where in the signal cycle a call is requested. Some crossings may be slightly longer while others shorter. Pedestrians would have the benefit of the shorter crossing distances and middle refuge for those electing to cross without the aid of the lights.

The improvements involve widening on Kirkstall Lane along the site frontage to a greater extent than previously proposed in order to accommodate the island and maintain running widths and bus lay-by. To achieve safe movement on Kirkstall Lane (east to west) there must be associated widening on the opposite approach to the junction.

To achieve the island on Kirkstall Hill widening is required on the eastern side, opposite the site on Council owned land, as well as the site frontage. The bus lay-by is maintained with a new section of footway leading to it. The Developer is exploring options to upgrade as a public amenity the area of Council owned land adjacent to no. 62 Kirkstall Lane as replacement for the area given over to the highway improvements.

#### Kirkstall Hill / Beecroft Street

This junction is signalised as previously proposed in order to accommodate safe access for the large increase in turning manoeuvres associated with the District Centre. Signalled pedestrian facilities are provided for.

Widening is required on Kirkstall Hill for the full length of the site frontage for a new lane to safely accommodate right turn movements at this junction and at Kirkstall Lane.

#### Commercial Road / Beecroft Street

This junction is proposed to be signalised in order to safely accommodate traffic accessing and egressing the District Centre. In undertaking such a design consideration must be given to the QBI scheme proposed on the A65.

The design for this junction is split into two phases. The first phase is a signalisation using the existing road alignments with the option of a left turn filter and island. Note that the pedestrian movement across the bottom of Beecroft Street cannot be provided with red and green men. It is considered that with this layout the junction and gyratory cannot accommodate the full development proposals. Phase 1 therefore has a number of restrictions placed on the Development to keep trip rates down.

Phase 2 ties in with the QBI scheme and provides two lanes within Commercial Road for City bound traffic. The provision of this extra lane allows for a two lane right turn from the gyratory (Savin's Mill Way) thus alleviating one of the key concerns regarding gridlock of the gyratory and access to the development. This phase would require the demolition of four properties numbered 41 to 47 Commercial Road. These works are considered essential to allow the full potential of the District Centre, for the restrictions put in place at Phase 1 to be removed, and to keep queuing down to existing levels. This scheme should also be beneficial to the through flow of buses on the QBI corridor and approaching from across the river. Signalised pedestrian facilities would be provided across Beecroft Street and Commercial Road (as part of QBI).

Phase 2 of the junction improvements would also include some minor works at the junction of Bridge Road / Leeds Bradford Road in the form of a new controller giving more efficient phasing and lessening the impact of development traffic on the queues on Wyther Lane, Broad Lane and Leeds & Bradford Road.

#### Phasing of highway works and restrictions

##### PHASE 1

##### Works

- Implementation of Kirkstall Hill / Kirkstall Lane improvements
- Introduction of signal control at the Kirkstall Hill / Beecroft Street junction
- Interim scheme signalisation of Beecroft Street / Commercial Road Restrictions
- 75% of retail to open after 09:30 in morning
- 35% of residential development to be occupied by key worker / non-car households, the elderly and / or social housing
- Car parking in the multistorey restricted

The restrictions of retail opening and residential usage lower the estimated trip generation rates for the development as a whole reducing the traffic impact.

## PHASE 2

- Introduction of the Commercial Road / Beecroft Street final junction layout on implementation of QBI scheme
- Improvements at the Leeds Bradford Road signal junction
- Removal of restrictions listed in Phase 1

Espalier has agreed to pursue with their best endeavours the acquisition of the four properties on the Commercial Road frontage to enable the scheme to be completed. Failing this, however, the Council may be required to use CPO powers. The properties at present are in a variety of commercial uses e.g. private hire office, two hot food takeaways and a hairdressers. They are 2 storey, stone built with a hipped slate roof and have been extended in part to the rear. They do however form a group of older historic properties along Abbey Road / Commercial Road.

Metro have requested public transport improvements as part of the scheme including the provision of bus stops and real time information around the site and also suggesting improvements at Headingley railway station nearby.

### 9.3 Scale and Design

The scheme has been developed through long discussions with Council Officers, Ward Members and public consultation. The scheme was designed to create a district centre with a mix of uses and sense of place taking into consideration local characteristics. It is considered that the scheme has been developed through a strong urban design framework. The form of the buildings are considered to respond well to the topography of the site and the contextual response to the nearby properties is subtle and appropriate, for example the stepping down of terraces and the perimeter blocks provide a strong urban structure to the site. A mix of materials both contemporary/modern and traditional are considered appropriate for this type of development. The level of detail provided to date in relation to blocks A to G is considered acceptable. There is less detail for blocks H and J which are indicative at this stage so that there is flexibility to look at this further as the scheme progresses.

There is no doubt that this is a high density scheme with a significant intensification of floorspace on the site. However a high intensity scheme is appropriate at a District Centre location. The heights of buildings are generally in the 4-9 storeys range with the highest buildings within the site and at the edge on the Kirkstall Hill / Beecroft Street corner. The land rises significantly up Kirkstall Lane and Kirkstall Hill so the

development will be seen in this context with higher land behind and the 12 storey tower blocks of Grayson Heights and Towers to the south and east.

The future of the four commercial properties on the Commercial Road frontage remains uncertain at present. Further work is being done to look at their historical significance but they are needed at present for Phase 2 to proceed and their inclusion within the scheme is also preferable in urban design terms to deliver the whole site as an integrated scheme. Their scale at present could lead to difficulties in relation to proposed buildings at the bottom end of the site but this would need to be explored further as the development progresses and particularly detailed design for the lower half of the site.

#### 9.4. Public realm and pedestrian linkages

The scheme incorporates public open space and landscaping in terms of a public square and semi-private amenity spaces for future residents which is well thought out, linking the buildings and open space. The Kirkstall Square area located below Blocks A and G which is proposed as a mixed use area for public open space and parking, creating a 'market' style area; Tannery Square is located behind Kirkstall Steps and Square bounded by Blocks A, B and D. The residential courtyard which is semi-private for the residents is located between Blocks C, D, E and F. These areas are the main areas of public realm/open space and semi-private open space. These areas would be landscaped relating to their urban setting, details of which would be a reserved matter. The public open space amount proposed is less than the policies suggest given the scale and intensity of development, however the spaces work well within the design concept and should produce a high quality scheme of both buildings and spaces. The future of the current landscaped area along the A65 frontage is not clear at this stage but it is likely that the context will inevitably become more urban and building dominated as a result of the redevelopment and to ensure that the new District Centre has a public face onto the A65.

Improved pedestrian linkages are considered important in this location and the scheme incorporates pedestrian links through the site from all boundaries of the site. Some concern has been raised regarding disabled access from Commercial Street to the rest of the site. The difficulties are caused by level changes across the site but it is considered that further work can be done on this as the detail of the scheme is worked up – particularly at the bottom of the site. On the upper part of the site the development has been designed so that a level access is provided from the Kirkstall Hill / Kirkstall Lane junction through to Beecroft Street near the Sandford Road junction. Due to the levels differences across the site steps are inevitable in places but they have been designed in as a feature of the scheme to achieve good visual links within the scheme from the lower to the higher levels.

#### 9.5 Mix of Housing

PPS3 guidance (para 69) advises that in deciding planning applications, Local Planning Authorities should have regard to:

- achieving high quality housing
- ensuring developments achieve a good mix of housing reflecting the accommodation requirements of specific groups, in particular, families and older people

- the suitability of a site for housing, including its environmental sustainability
- using land effectively and efficiently.

Whilst only indicative at this stage, the development proposes 669 residential units which would comprise the following:

- A range of studios, one bed, two bed and three bed flats.
- 26% of units to be accommodation for key workers and managed students;
- 10.5% (by area) of units to be sheltered accommodation for over 50s.

Whilst the precise mix of units will be determined at the reserved matters stage, it is anticipated that the scheme will deliver a good blend across the application site. At present the scheme indicates 127 studio flats, 232 1bed flats, 116 2 bed flats, 16 3 bed flats and 178 key worker / student studios. To give an idea of possible prices figures in the financial appraisal suggest prices would range from £81,000 for a studio to £137,000 for a 2bed flat.

The development proposes housing on a brownfield site in the defined Main Urban Area and is considered to comply with the requirements of Policy H4 in that:

- It maximises the use of a previously developed site in a designated town centre;
- Housing as an intrinsic and compatible use would underpin the mixed use regeneration of Kirkstall District Centre;
- The site is sequentially preferable in terms of national guidance contained in PPS3 (Housing) given its highly accessible location by foot, cycling, public transport and proximity to jobs, local services and local amenities.
- The range of dwellings provide a mix in the size and type available to assist in meeting the housing requirements of the whole community;
- The site can be accommodated within the capacity of the existing and proposed infrastructure given the junction improvements, car parking and ease of access to the local facilities and amenities.

The applicant has commissioned specialist consultants to carry out an assessment of demand for residential development in Kirkstall to inform the proposed mix of units. The report researched the existing local and Leeds demographics and the associated demand for residential properties taking into account residential developments under construction and those with consent yet to be built. The research concluded that the demand for accommodation in the immediate area is 7 times the average for Leeds and the UK. The majority of this demand is from the household groups known as 'Aspiring Singles' (young people who live in urban and suburban locations in small (often rented) one or two bed flats) and 'Educated Urbanites' (highly qualified young people who also live in flats in urban and suburban locations) who are at the early stages of their careers and trying to get a foot on the property ladder. These groups are classic flat and apartment dwellers and they are the predominant market surrounding the site, in fact making up nearly 40% of the adult population within one mile of the site.

The application is considered to meet this demand whilst providing a good balance and mix of dwelling sizes in accordance with guidance in PPS3 (Housing). Whilst officers would usually request that 25% of residential units be affordable in this



location (in accordance with the Revised Supplementary Guidance), Policy H12 in the UDP acknowledges that abnormal development costs specific to certain sites may mean that the normal provision of affordable housing will not be possible. In such circumstances it provides for the Council to negotiate the proportion and type of affordable units appropriate to these sites. To this end the applicant has submitted a detailed financial appraisal of the proposed scheme which provides a breakdown of all the associated development costs. The appraisal concludes that, due to the abnormal development costs resulting from the comprehensive nature of the development set over a steeply sloping site and including significant new public realm at the heart of the community, it is not possible to include any traditional affordable housing (i.e. subsidised sale or transfer of units to a Registered Social Landlord).

Given the difficulties in achieving a viable scheme on this site, and the overall benefits resulting from the delivery of a successful district centre, there are significant material considerations that comprise exceptional circumstances in this instance and so the Council are not seeking the provision of affordable housing as part of the scheme. The proposals do include a large number of smaller units which will be lower cost housing and will therefore help meet local needs. The significant provision of studios and one bed apartments (with fewer two bed properties) will introduce an opportunity for those people who have otherwise been unable to enter the housing market in Kirkstall.

The residential units in Blocks H & J are proposed to be reserved as accommodation for key workers and managed students. The provision of student accommodation in this location is in accordance with the Council's UDP Policy H15 (Area of Housing Mix). Policy H15 seeks to restrict the change of use of dwellings to student accommodation and encourage purpose built student housing. The provision of purpose built student accommodation will relieve pressure on local family housing whilst introducing a population that is not traditionally reliant on the use of a car. A detailed delivery mechanism to ensure that these units remain as managed student accommodation and/or key worker housing in perpetuity will need to be agreed through a Section 106 agreement as part of any approval.

The applicant is proposing to allocate 10.5% (by area) of the units to Sheltered Accommodation targeted at the over-50s (or other low car owning user groups). This will further ensure a mixed community that accords with guidance in PPS3.

#### 9.6 Joint Service Centre / LIFT

The proposal as revised incorporates a JSC for the Council combined with health facilities in Block G. There have been long negotiations held with all interested parties and stakeholders regarding this. At present the position is that the City Council is now pursuing a JSC (including Council facilities and the Credit Union without the PCT element) on City Council land at the bottom of the site on Commercial Road outside the red line of this application, but adjoining, as its preferred option. The future of the other element of the LIFT building (the PCT element) remains uncertain given the current changes and reorganization of the PCTs. However officers are continuing to work to seek to deliver both elements which are important to the delivery of the new District Centre. There is flexibility within the scheme to incorporate the JSC / LIFT elements either in the location currently indicated or elsewhere on the site.

## 9.7 Quality

PPS1 guidance (para 35) states that high quality and inclusive design should create well-mixed and integrated developments which avoid segregation and have well-planned public spaces that bring people together and provide opportunities for physical activity and recreation. This requires carefully planned, high quality buildings and spaces that support the efficient use of resources adding to the overall character and quality of the area over the lifetime of the development. In achieving these objectives, securing high quality and inclusive design should:

- address the connections between people and places by considering the needs of people to access jobs and key services;
- be integrated into the existing urban form and natural and built environment;
- be an integral part of the processes for ensuring successful, safe and inclusive villages, towns and cities;
- create an environment where everyone can access and benefit from the full range of opportunities available to members of society; and
- consider the direct and indirect impact on the natural environment.

Overall considerable time and effort has been spent in producing a design framework for the site which can deliver high quality buildings and spaces and a sense of place which has local distinctiveness. The principles outlined in PPS1 will continue to be used in the working up of the further detail and future planning submissions for the delivery of the District Centre.

## 9.8 Planning Benefits

The development at present involves a substantial investment ( greater than £100 million ) in creating a new centre for Kirkstall. The delivery of the District Centre and the stimulus it will provide to the local area is the main planning benefit. Additional benefits include the provision of a range of facilities to serve the local community, high quality buildings and public realm, highway and transport infrastructure works and substantial car parking on site largely hidden from view.

The development cannot deliver all the policy requirements for off site highway improvements, public transport, affordable housing and greenspace and still be viable. A viability appraisal has been submitted and considered by officers. The assumptions which have been built into the appraisal appear reasonable and robust. The applicant has requested that they provide a planning obligation pot of money which the City Council can use to deliver the planning obligations as it seems fit. A similar approach has been used at Kirkstall Forge. Separate to the “pot” would be the off site highway works which will need to be provided and be subject to a Section 278 agreement with the City Council as Highway Authority. At present the applicants have offered a pot of some £500,000 and the following matters have already been identified;

- Parking Survey (£4000);
- Residents parking scheme (£5000);

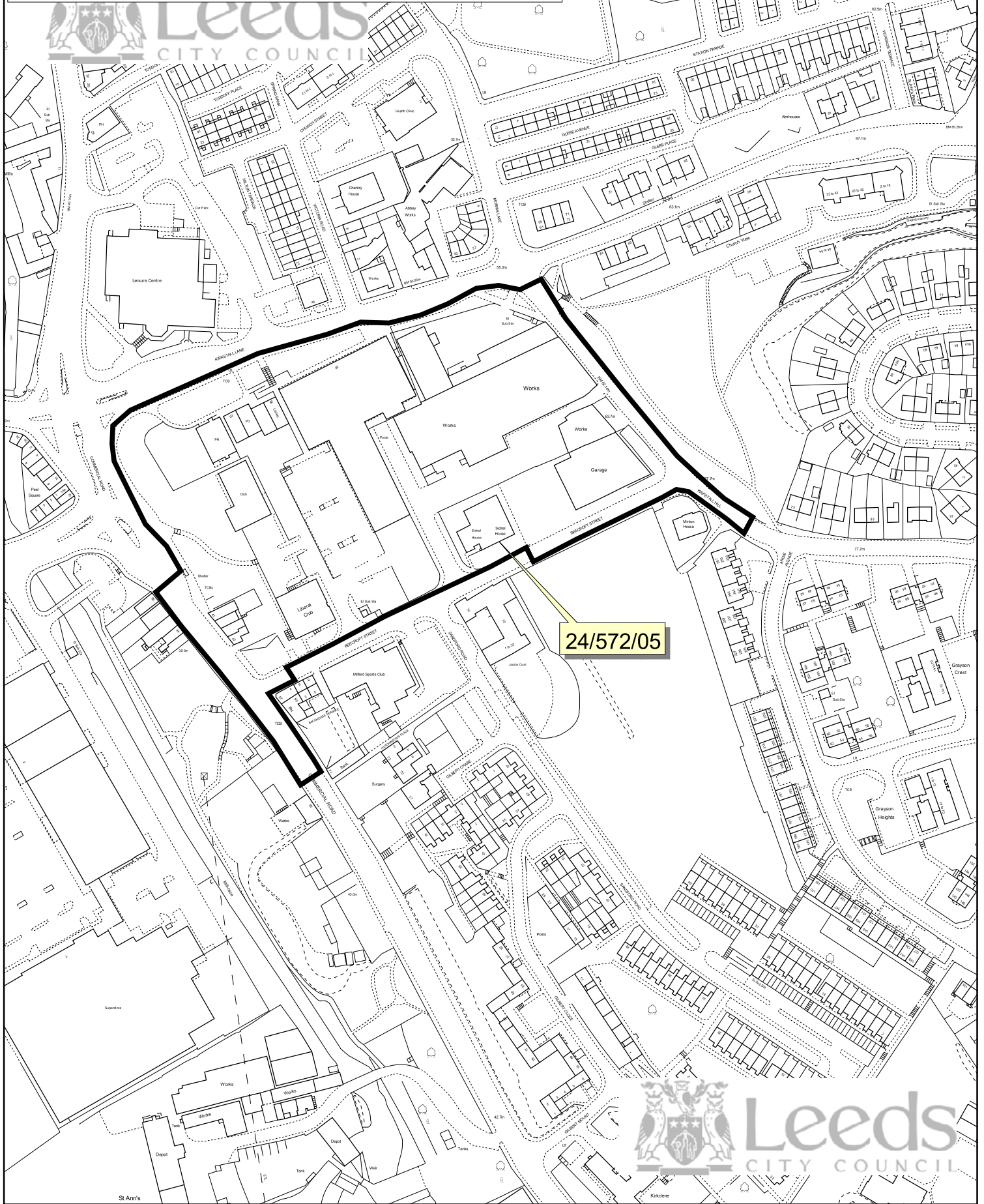
- Car club initial subsidy (£100,350);
- 2 Bus Shelters and kerb alterations (£20,000);
- Real Time Bus Information on site (£16,500);
- Real time information at 4 nearby bus stops (£40,000);
- Relocation of bus lay-by on Kirkstall Hill (£50,000);
- Traffic Regulation Orders for on-street parking on Beecroft Street (£5000)

Prior to the Panel meeting it is hoped that a paper setting out the heads of terms of a Section 106 Agreement and suggested conditions ( in summary) can be circulated to Members for consideration.

#### 10.0 **Conclusion:**

Since the last report in November there has been significant progress in resolving a way forward on the traffic impact of this development. Given the deterioration to the existing centre it is important that a decision is soon made on this proposal for a new Centre. Members are asked therefore to support the application in principle and to defer and delegate final approval to the Chief Planning Officer subject to the completion of the legal agreement and the imposition of appropriate conditions in consultation with Ward Members.

EXTRACT FROM THE LEEDS UDP PROPOSALS MAP  
Adopted - 1st August 2001



# WEST PLANS PANEL

