

Plans Panel Annual Report 2017-18



Introduction

Welcome to the Plans Panels and the Development Plan Panel annual report covering the work of the Panels April 2017- March 2018. This report provides the opportunity to highlight and review last year's activity and describe some of the key achievements in helping deliver the Best City Priorities.

2017- 18 activity levels saw Planning Services' application workload breach the 5,000 mark for the first time since the economic crash in 2008, resulting again in busy Panels; this was the sixth successive year of an increase in application workloads. The Panels have seen some large and strategically important schemes coming forward, particularly for housing sites which are imperative to deliver the homes we need for our local communities.

The long anticipated increase in national planning application fees was implemented in January 2018. The Government's requirement to spend the increased income on planning resources meant the staff establishment could be increased for the first time in a number of years. This additional capacity will assist in delivering the most strategically important sites in Leeds as well as delivering in a timely fashion householder applications, which still account for almost half of the application workload received in Leeds. There is still the need to be mindful however of the increasing demands placed on Planning Services and this is reflected in the work of the Plans Panels, which have a challenging role balancing the needs of the city, delivering the inclusive growth needed, whilst still taking account of local communities. Members feel they have struck the right balance by providing opportunities for pre application presentations and position statements and the ability for community representatives to address the Panel to share their concerns and ideas, in addition to the public speaking rights at the final determination stage.

The Panels have long been considered to be the shop window for planning in Leeds; the way business is conducted, the way decisions are made, as well as the decisions themselves, provide an insight into the culture and attitude to economic growth in Leeds. Therefore, their role is key in delivering growth in Leeds. Planning Services has a long track record of service improvement and given the challenging planning landscape, it was timely to review the role the Plans Panels play in delivering good growth in Leeds. A review has been undertaken, commencing in early 2018.

For the Development Plan Panel it has been a significant and challenging year, particularly given the impact of the DCLG (now MHCLG) consultation *Planning for the right homes in the right places*, in September 2017 on the timescale for the examination for the Site Allocations Plan (SAP) taking place in October 2017. A way forward was found in respect of housing and mixed use sites, with a pause in further SAP hearings until July – August 2018 and we are now awaiting the Inspectors report. Considerable work was required also for the submission of the Core Strategy Selective Review in August 2018 and we anticipate a busy time going forward with the Examination in Public likely in February 2019.



A further challenging but rewarding year is anticipated, but I feel the Plans Panels and Development Plan Panel are best placed to continue to support the Council's ambitions through their focus on delivering high quality outcomes for the people of Leeds.

Councillor Richard Lewis, Executive Member for Regeneration, Transport and Planning

Plans Panels and Development Plan

Panel Contribution to Best City Priorities



Housing

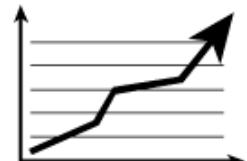
Delivering planning permissions for high quality private homes and social housing



21st Century infrastructure

Helping to deliver the infrastructure to support new homes and businesses

Inclusive growth
Delivering the development to support people and businesses grow



Child friendly city
contributing to places where children and young people feel safe and welcome and involved and informed about what goes on around them

Best City Priorities

Culture

Contributing to the vitality, culture and economy of the City Centre



Safe and Strong Communities

Community involvement in the planning process, helping to deliver cohesive communities



Health and well being
Delivering high quality homes in safe communities with access to green space where people can enjoy active lives



Summary of activity at Plans Panels



39 Plans Panel meetings and 8 Development Plan Panel meetings



119 decisions made



86 site visits made

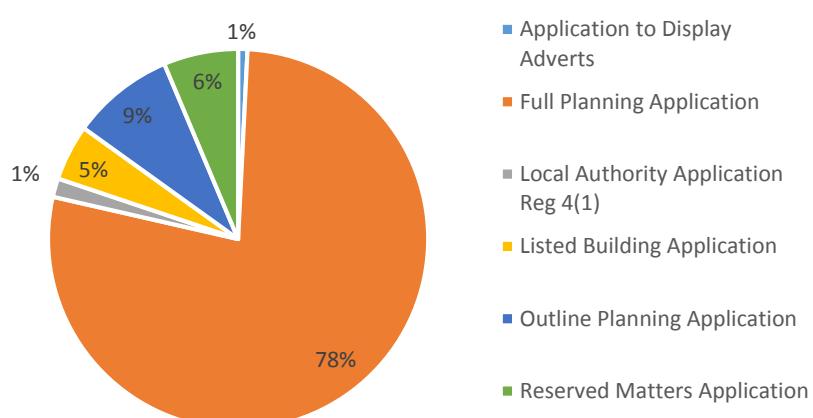


Four decisions contrary to officer recommendation (or 3.3%, as a % of the total number of Panel decisions)



16 pre-application presentations

All Panels- Workload Breakdown





**15 schemes with S106
employment and skills
obligations, creating employment
and apprentice opportunities for
local people**



**Panels granted
permission for
almost 4,500 new
homes, 2,000 more
than in 2016-17**



**Panels granted
permissions for over
£900m investment in
the City**

Significant applications considered by the Plans Panels

Applications are presented to Panel for a variety of reasons: member requests where there are deemed to be wider than local impacts, exceptions to the Chief Planning Officer's Delegation Scheme and applications which are sensitive or strategically important which need steer from elected members prior to determination. In 2017- 18 there have been a number of significant application determined by the Panels:

Temple Newsam Park: Use of woodland as a Go Ape high ropes course with an associated reception cabin. Permission was granted for the use of a portion of woodland (approx. 1.25ha), known as Menagerie Wood, to accommodate the installation of high rope adventure courses. The application site lies within Temple Newsam Estate which is a Grade II Registered Park and Garden and includes the Grade I Listed Temple Newsam House. The estate also contains a range of other Grade II* and II Listed Buildings. The part of the estate to which this application relates is to the north-east of Temple Newsam House (which stands over 400m away) within an area of woodland known as Menagerie Wood.



Land at Wetherby Road, Bardsey: 140 houses, public open space and flood alleviation measures. This was refused as the site is located within the Green Belt. The applicant was the Bramham Estate who submitted a very special circumstances case that they needed the proceeds generated by the development to pay for the upkeep of listed buildings on the Estate.

Land Between Ring Road Shadwell and Thorpe Park, Leeds: Construction of a dual carriageway orbital route incorporating new roundabouts, cycle and pedestrian bridges, underpass and overbridge; laying out of country park. Planning permission was granted for the East Leeds Orbital Road (ELOR), a new dual carriageway which will run north to south around the north-eastern and eastern fringes of the Leeds urban area. It forms an integral part of the East Leeds Extension (ELE), identified as a major development area to the east of Leeds to deliver circa 5000 new homes. The ELOR is a critical element in the delivery of the ELE to provide strategic transport and movement improvements in this part of the city providing connections to Thorpe Park and a potential new rail station to the south.

Northern Development Plots, Land South of Railway Line, Thorpe Park: Reserved Matters



Application for 296 dwellings with layout, scale, appearance, landscape and access. The application relates to the northern half of the employment allocation at Thorpe Park that totalled approximately 65 hectares. The site is located to the south of the Leeds-York railway line and Manston Lane, west of the M1 (junction 46), north of the A63 Selby Road and the existing Thorpe Park buildings. The scheme was significant as Members encouraged the applicant, Redrow, to depart from their standard house types and to introduce a more contemporary design of dwelling. Redrow

responded on that part of the development facing central park and the main Thorpe Park developments and this was generally well received.

Chevin Park, former High Royds Hospital, Menston LS29 6FS: Phased conversion of the former administration block and workshops to create 46 residential units and one retail unit and erection of 25 new dwellings, to coincide with the restoration of the listed building.

The applicant submitted a very special circumstances case for the new development which revolved around restoration of the main administration block which is a grade II listed building and the most important building on the site architecturally.



Land to the East of Otley Road, Adel: An outline application for residential development for up to 100 dwellings and land reserved for a primary school with the principle of development and means of access applied for and all other matters reserved.

Land at former St Joseph's Convalescent Home, Outwood Lane, Horsforth: **28 apartments and 13 houses.** The 28 apartments are affordable housing (68% of all on site) and the buildings will reflect the characteristics of the conservation area. The proposals will deliver redevelopment of a brownfield site and provision of much needed affordable housing for the area.

101-104 Kirkgate, 9-13 Crown Court and Crown Street Car Park, Leeds : retrospective demolition of 101-104 Kirkgate, the demolition of 9-13 Crown Court, and the construction of new residential buildings with ground floor A1 retail, A3 café/restaurant uses and leisure uses, basement car parking and associated public realm. It was the view of Members that once completed the scheme would deliver a very much improved Kirkgate façade.

First White Cloth Hall: Permission granted for external alterations including re-instatement of the west wing, new covered courtyard with atrium, new circulation core to rear, new shopfront and Listed Building Consent. The building is a very important and significant historic building within the city centre and its restoration has been a challenge for many years.



Monk Bridge Viaduct, Leeds: restoration and reuse for a mixed use development including three new residential buildings and the refurbishment of the existing Victorian viaduct for commercial and retail use. Up to 607 apartments in five buildings, with 307 apartments being made available to the Private Rented Sector (PRS).



Leeds Beckett University Creative Arts Building: 14,500sqm scheme will provide a home for academic, creative and cultural activities located at the edge of the Civic Quarter of Leeds



Development Plan Panel



The Development Plan Panel is an Advisory Committee, which makes recommendations to both the Executive and Council regarding the Authority's Local Plan.

The year has been particularly significant for the Development Plan Panel with the culmination of several work streams which had been progressing for a number of years, therefore agendas have largely been dominated with the Site Allocations Plan.

It had proved to be a particularly challenging summer 2017 with the publication of the DCLG (now MHCLG) consultation, *Planning for the right homes in the right places*, on the approach to assess housing needs and the proposed standardised method to calculating housing need. The consultation calculated projected housing need for Leeds at a significantly lower baseline than the adopted Core Strategy figure. This was at a time when the Council had already submitted its SAP to the Secretary of State for Examination and hearings were about to commence. The decision was taken to continue with the examination process to reflect the importance of having an allocations plan for in Leeds, but in the context that further technical work was carried out to ensure that the City was providing the necessary protections for its Green Belt. The October 2017 hearings therefore did not consider housing and mixed use sites consideration of which was paused to a date following the completion of technical work. The view was taken that maintaining progress with the Local Plan creates certainty for investors and prevents speculative development, whilst work on meeting the clear needs for more housing, especially affordable homes continued through to the recent hearings held in July 2018.

Other work areas included:

- Negotiated stopping sites for Gypsy and Travellers
- Technical work on housing numbers
- Core Strategy Selective Review
- Consideration of the activity of the Housing Growth Programme to deliver and accelerate the delivery of new housing supply

Reflecting on the year

Joint Plans Panel

Joint Plans Panel is an informal meeting bringing together the Council's Area Plans Panels, City Plans Panel and Development Plan Panel for consultation and training and to discuss matters relating to development management, planning policy and government initiatives. The Joint Plans Panel has met twice during 2017-18 and covered the following items:

- Performance reporting
- Planning and schools provision
- Buildings at Risk
- Neighbourhood Planning
- Update of the Site Allocations Plan
- Leeds response to the Grenfell Tower tragedy
- Vacant Building Credit
- Update on housing mix

Review of the Plans Panels

During spring 2018, the service commissioned a review of the Plans Panels; this was in the context of the demanding pace of planning reform along with the aspirations for growth in Leeds, increased expectations of what planning should and can deliver by local communities, elected members and the development industry. The review considered the challenging planning landscape, in an environment of diminishing resources and budget challenges. An officer report has been produced and shared with the Joint Member Officer Working Group with a number of recommendations for the service and members to now work through.

Joint Member Officer Working Group

The Joint Member Officer Working Group is a cross party working group meeting throughout the year to discuss matters relating to service improvement and wider operational planning matters. The group met once in 2017-18, but the intention is to refresh this meeting and meet more regularly (it has already met twice in 2018-19). Items discussed in the reporting year included:

- Plans Panel Review
- Planning Protocol- Chamber of Commerce and Planning Services joint protocol
- Member tour of past application sites

Member training

In order to sit on the Panel members must complete mandatory training; 100% of Plans Panel members completed this training in 2017-18. Changes to the Council Procedure Rules to allow greater flexibility around the appointment of substitutes to Plans Panels was agreed by full Council in January 2017, subject to members having the appropriate training and abide by the *Planning Code of Good Practice*. All members substituting on the Plans Panels have received this training. In addition, the service has started on its roll out of workshop style training for members with the first on tall buildings being delivered. A programme of training will be developed for 2018-19.