Proof of Evidence of The Leeds Railway Station (Southern Entrance) Order
( LSSE / PTE / P/4.1 )
Planning and Urban Design
November 2012
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Mott MacDonald
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1 Introduction

1.1 Qualifications and Experience

1.1.1 My name is Eileen Thomas. I have an MPhil in Planning from University College London and am a Member of the Royal Town Planning Institute. I hold a Diploma in Architecture from the Architectural Association and am a Member of the Royal Institute of British Architects. I also have an MBA.

1.1.2 I have had a thirty year career mainly working for local authorities, for fifteen of these years as a Director of planning, economic development and related functions. Among other roles I managed an architecture, urban design and conservation team for a number of years and over the last six years, while working for Mott MacDonald as a Divisional Director, I have specialised in planning, urban design and conservation advice. During this time I have advised on the planning and design aspects of a number of rail related schemes, including the Victoria Station Underground proposals and Crossrail.

1.1.3 I have sat on the RTPI Urban Design and Conservation Panel (now Network) for the last fifteen years and have been a judge several times on their behalf for the “Brick Awards” - a national architectural competition.

1.2 Scope of Evidence

My evidence is in several parts and covers the following information:

1.2.1 Section 2 deals with the strategic planning aspects of the Leeds Station Southern Entrance proposals (“the Scheme”). It explains why the Scheme is important in both serving and helping to regenerate the city centre - by improving access to and from the station for the people who live and work in the area and relieving congestion. It also looks at the sustainability benefits of using transport modes other than the car.

1.2.2 Section 3 deals with architecture, urban design and conservation aspects, explaining the rationale behind the location, layout, form and appearance of the LSSE proposals - which have been designed to minimise any potential adverse impacts on local residents, complement the local setting and create an important landmark in the area. This section also looks at improvements planned for Little Neville Street, the entrance route to the Scheme from the east.

1.2.3 In addition, this section addresses the objections and representations that have been levelled at the Scheme in terms of impact on visual amenity and heritage. In this respect my evidence should be read with the Environmental Proof of Evidence (ref LSSE./PTE/P/5.1), which deals with a number of complementary topics which are summarised in this proof.
1.2.4 Lastly Section 3 covers an application for conservation area consent for the dismantling of a wall, arch and foundations, for a site located on Water Lane to the east of the main site, which is to be used as a barge loading/unloading area during construction.

1.2.5 Section 4 provides an overall planning assessment of the Scheme and Section 5 gives the conclusions.

1.3 Response to Statement of Matters

In this Proof of Evidence I will deal with the following items in the Secretary of State’s Statement of Matters:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Matter</th>
<th>Relevant section</th>
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<tr>
<td>2. The justification of the particular proposals in the draft TWA Order including the anticipated transportation, regeneration and environmental benefits of the scheme.</td>
<td>Section 2.5 justifies the proposals in terms of strategic regeneration and transportation aspects. Section 3 and 4 look at environmental benefits.</td>
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<td>4. The extent to which the scheme would be consistent with the National Planning Policy Framework and regional and local transport, environmental and planning policies</td>
<td>Section 2.4 covers the planning policy aspects of the scheme from a national, regional and local context. Environmental policies are dealt with in the Environmental Proof of Evidence (ref LSSE.PTE/P/5.1). Section 3.2 covers urban design policies at a national, regional and local level.</td>
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<td>5. The likely impact on residents, businesses and the environment of the of the scheme during construction and after opening to the public items (d) and (e)</td>
<td>(d) Impacts on townscape including the character and appearance of the conservation area. Sections 3.4 - 3.6 deal with impacts on townscape and on the conservation area. Section 5.1 summarises construction and operational impacts. e) Impacts on light and visual amenity, privacy and security, including effects of oversailing crane operations. Sections 3.4 - 3.6 deal with impacts on light, visual amenity, privacy and security during operation of the facility. Section 5.1 summarises operational and construction impacts.</td>
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<td>9. The conditions proposed to be attached to deemed planning permission for the scheme, if given and whether those conditions meet the tests of DOE Circular 11/95 of being necessary, relevant enforceable, precise and reasonable.</td>
<td>Reference to conditions proposed to be attached in relation to planning and urban design aspects are contained within paragraph 3.5.17 and 3.6.7.</td>
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10. Whether there is a compelling case in the public interest for conferring powers on the promoters to compulsorily acquire and use land for the purposes of the scheme, having regard to guidance on the making of compulsory purchase orders (CPOs) and whether the land and rights in land for which the CPO powers are sought are required by the promoters in order to achieve satisfactory implementation of the scheme.  
These matters are covered by Section 2.5 which deals with strategic planning case for the Scheme.

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<th>In relation to the application for conservation area consent</th>
<th>These matters are dealt with in Section 3.7. Conditions are covered in paragraph 3.7.7.</th>
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13. The extent to which the proposed dismantling and reinstatement of the structure at Water Lane ("the works") are in accordance with the development plan for the area including any saved policies the weight that should be attached to the development plan and any emerging plans.

14. The extent to which the works would accord with the National Planning Policy Framework and in particular the desirability of conserving Leeds City Centre Conservation Area.

15. If consent is granted the need for any conditions to ensure the dismantling and reinstatement is carried out in a satisfactory manner.

1.4 Glossary

1.4.1 This Proof of Evidence uses the abbreviations as contained in the overall Glossary (LSSE.PTE/P/8.1)
2 Strategic Planning considerations

2.1 Planning Context

2.1.1 Leeds City Station is located in the centre of Leeds and sits above a viaduct known as the Dark Arches. The Dark Arches are a monumental engineering structure built in Victorian times which has enabled Leeds Station to be constructed over the passage of the River Aire. The station is one of Network Rail’s busiest stations, serving the city centre of Leeds, with local, regional and inter-city rail services. It is used by around 100,000 passengers per day, with this figure anticipated to grow by up to 42% from 2011 to 2026 (Northern RUS forecasts) or up to 49% (Yorkshire Rail Network Study) for a similar period. Much of this growth is expected to come from the south of the city, an area of underused or vacant former industrial land which is gradually being redeveloped in line with Council policy.

2.1.2 As passenger numbers continue to rise, future enhancements to passenger through flow capacity will be required. There is also a need to alleviate peak hour passenger congestion and improve accessibility from the south. The existing station entrance is located to the north of the station off New Station Street with a drop off point from Princes Square to the northwest. These provide easy access to City Square to the north and the city centre beyond. A new southern entrance would route a substantial proportion of passengers away from the existing main entrance and directly to and from their destinations to the south of the station. This would cater for future growth and relieve the peak hour congestion that presently occurs near the main entrance.

2.1.3 The Dark Arches impede traffic and pedestrian movement from the south into the city centre, the only significant road link from the south in the vicinity of the station being Neville Street. Any passengers wanting to access the station from the south currently have no alternative but to use an indirect route through the Neville Street underpass beneath the station and then to ascend the steep ‘Rotunda’ steps to the south east of the existing station entrance. If they cannot use the steps they must take an even more circuitous route below the front of the station along Bishopgate Street and then into New Station Street from the northwest. Their return journey must also use these routes.

2.1.4 The recent refurbishment of the underpass on Neville Street has improved the quality of this journey but this route is for the main part unpleasant in aspect, especially as the underpass is dark and not overlooked.

2.1.5 Were the LSSE Scheme to proceed, it is estimated that 22-24% of passengers (approximately 20,000 passengers per day) going to or coming from Leeds City Station would use this entrance, benefitting from an estimated average time saving of 133 seconds for each trip. The
saving in time from areas to the south west of the station such as Holbeck would be considerably more than this, especially for those who cannot use the steep steps.

2.1.6 Although for some at least, the walking time saved may seem to be relatively short, over the course of a year this additional time mounts up. It can be argued that the current access arrangements present not only a physical barrier to movement to and from the south, but also a psychological barrier. A good example of this is recent internet reviews for the Hilton Hotel in Neville Street. Although these sometimes applaud the convenience of being close to the station, a comment made on 23rd May 2011 states “Liked least: Walk to Hilton to/from town as it goes through a dark, noisy underpass. Doesn't feel like you're about to walk into a Hilton”. This was stated after improvements had been made. Although the walk to the town centre would remain, with the proposed LSSE, the journey route to and from the station will be far more agreeable than it is now.

2.1.7 The objectives of the LSSE Scheme are as follows:

- to improve access to Leeds Station by sustainable means;
- to maximise growth of the Leeds economy by enhancing its competitive position and facilitating its future employment and population growth;
- to support and facilitate the sustainable growth of Leeds, in particular to the south, recognising the importance of its city centre to the future economy of the Leeds City region;
- to minimise journey times accessing Leeds station to/from the south;
- to meet existing and future passenger flow requirements to the south of Leeds Station; and
- to ensure the current passenger flows within the station are maintained or improved.

The strategic planning section of this proof will concentrate on the first three of these objectives.

2.1.8 A copy of the decision notice (May 2010) relating to a previous application to Leeds City Council (LCC) for the LSSE (application 09/04625/FU) - an almost identical scheme to what is currently proposed, is included with the documents (ref LSSE D11). The LCC report which considered the Scheme is summarised in Section 5.2 of this evidence.

2.2 Site and Surroundings

2.2.1 The total site area which is contained within the TWAO application limits is 2.02 hectares (ha). This includes the separate site on Water Lane to the east of 0.38ha, which has been reserved for temporary access for barge loading/unloading and storage during construction (Figure 2.1).
2.2.2 The proposed LSSE site is situated immediately south of Leeds City Station adjacent to the Dark Arches which transect much of the city centre and bridge the River Aire in this vicinity. Just south of here the waterway becomes the Aire and Calder Navigation and flows in an easterly direction. The Leeds and Liverpool Canal also joins the Aire and Calder Navigation at this point arriving from the west.

Figure 2.1 Location

2.2.3 The main shopping and business area lies to the north of the station, whereas much of the area to the south is comprised of redundant or derelict industrial buildings, which are gradually being redeveloped or refurbished for a mixture of residential apartments, businesses and offices. The Granary Wharf (ISIS) development is located south west of the Dark Arches with Holbeck Urban Village (HUV) to the south west of here. To the east of Neville Street is The Calls Commercial District and south of this are other commercial areas.

2.2.4 A substantial amount of development has already taken place. For instance, the Granary Wharf development contains shops, a hotel and restaurants (some of which have been converted from arches in the viaduct). Bridgewater Place to the south of the site, completed in 2007, is a spectacular 32 storey office block, also containing 200 flats and the head offices of ASDA (near the Water Lane site), which opened in the late 90s, now employs several thousand people.
2.2.5 Other parts of the area are in the early stages of redevelopment. This is particularly true of Holbeck Urban Village to the southwest of the site where 5,000 new jobs are planned in the creative industries. Initial developments here include the Tower Works and Marshall’s Mill both opened in 2012, with digital and media space.

2.2.6 The area still contains pockets of deprivation. Of the fourteen Super Output Areas (SOAs) in Holbeck and Beeston ward for instance, five are ranked in the most deprived in England and Wales; half of SOAs are ranked in the most deprived 20% (Index of Multiple Deprivation 2010).

2.2.7 The river flows in an approximately north-south direction under the Dark Arches and beneath the majority of the proposed site. Cutting through the Dark Arches immediately north of the site is Dark Neville Street, the easterly section of which is used for parking. Waterman’s Place, a modern 15 storey residential block fronting the river, is situated to the west of the site and forms part of the Granary Wharf development. The Blue Apartments are located on the eastern bank of the river, to the rear of which is Little Neville Street and the Hilton Hotel. The Blue Apartments are a 16 storey high residential block, with a ground floor retail use that has been fitted out as a golf shop and virtual driving range.

2.2.8 Road and pedestrian access to the east of the site is provided by Little Neville Street and Dark Neville Street (a private road). These link eastwards to Neville Street which is the main north-south route in this vicinity running northwards past the station and connecting to a wide area in the south of Leeds. The viaduct also crosses Swinegate some way to the east of this. In addition, there is a vehicular access from the southwest to Granary Wharf via Canal Wharf and Wharf Approach.

2.2.9 Pedestrian routes from Neville Street provide links to the Calls Commercial District and to the commercial areas further to the south. There are also pedestrian ways via Canal Wharf towards Holbeck and footpaths along the canal towpath to the west of Leeds. These initial routes then link to a much wider network covering the south of Leeds. In addition, there are several cycle-ways including Cycle Network Route 66 running besides the river and canal. Pedestrian crossing points of the River Aire are provided by Dark Neville Street (within the Dark Arches), a pedestrian bridge some 30m downstream of the site built as part of the Granary Wharf development and further south at Victoria Bridge.

2.3 Scheme description

2.3.1 A fuller description of the Scheme is given in Section 3 to this proof. In brief, the LSSE Scheme will include a concourse located above the river, comprising three levels within an enclosed building. Pedestrian bridges will provide direct access to the lower concourse level from the east and west banks of the river. The lower concourse also extends back through the
span of the station viaduct to a further open footbridge running parallel with Dark Neville Street.

2.3.2 The structure will contain two escalators, two lifts and stairs. The first level of the concourse provides potential emergency access to platforms. The upper level links to the existing western footbridge which crosses platforms 15, 16 and 17 and is to be widened to accommodate ticketing facilities.

2.3.3 The main enclosure takes the form of an arched canopy clad with gold coloured roofing. This is stepped horizontally to allow for glazed slots on each elevation and frames a glazed panel on the south elevation.

2.3.4 The Scheme contains provision for cycle storage. It is Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) compliant and will have CCTV. It is also accompanied by pedestrianisation proposals for Little Neville Street, allowing for essential local vehicular access.

2.3.5 Construction will take 62 weeks and approximately 100 staff will be employed at the peak of construction.

2.4 Relevant policy

2.4.1 The section identifies the planning policies at national, regional and local level that are pertinent to the justification of the Scheme. Several policy considerations are key in this respect:

- The presumption in favour of sustainable development under the new National Planning Policy Framework;
- The role that that improved infrastructure and in particular the LSSE Scheme can play in serving southern parts of the city and in stimulating regeneration here; and
- The health and sustainability benefits of encouraging greater use of public transport, walking and cycling as an alternative to the car.

It should be noted that many of the policies cited below which promote infrastructure improvements are rightly qualified by the need for these also to satisfy environmental objectives. The latter are addressed in the Environmental Proof of Evidence (ref LSSE.PTE/P/5.1) and are therefore not detailed here. However the policies mentioned should also be viewed in this light.

*National Planning Policy Framework 2012 (ref: LSSE.D24)*

2.4.2 In March 2012, the Government published the National Planning Policy Framework ("NPPF") with immediate and wide-ranging effect. It replaces practically all planning policy statements (PPS) and planning policy guidance (PPG). A key change to previous guidance is a
presumption in favour of sustainable development which balances economic, social and environmental factors. This therefore provides a more pro-active approach than before where the default answer now to development is ‘yes’, except where this would compromise key sustainable development principles.

2.4.3 Of relevance to the LSSE proposals, the NPPF seeks to build a strong and competitive economy and ensure the vitality of town centres. This includes addressing potential barriers to investment - such as a poor environment or lack of infrastructure (para 21).

2.4.4 The NPPF also states that transport policies have an important role to play in contributing to wider sustainable and health objectives (para 29).

_Yorkshire and Humber Plan 2008 (ref: LSSE.D17)_

2.4.5 Although it is the Government’s intention to abolish Regional Spatial Strategies (RSS) outside Greater London, the Yorkshire and Humber Plan (2008) is the current RSS for the region, which encompasses the City of Leeds and remains part of the statutory development framework. The RSS has a number of policies which refer directly to the continued growth of Leeds as a major European city and the role that transport investment can play in this.

Several aims included in Policy YH1 (Overall Approach and Key Spatial Priorities) are of relevance. This states, that in addition to protecting environmental resources, investment decisions should aim to:

- manage and spread the benefits of continued growth of the Leeds economy as a European centre of financial and business services;
- ensure that transport management and investment support and help deliver the spatial strategy.

2.4.6 Policy LCR2 (Regionally Significant Investment Priorities for the Leeds City Region) states that in order to deliver transformation and change, public and private sector investment will be targeted to improve public transport:

“particularly to Leeds city centre, to enhance the ease of movement and improve access to jobs within the City Region, particularly for disadvantaged communities”.

2.4.7 Policy T9 (Transport Investment and Management Priorities) also suggests that proposals should fully explore opportunities to make the best use of existing infrastructure by improving management and maintenance before recommending investment in new infrastructure.

2.4.8 With regard to encouraging people to use transport other than cars Policy YH2 (Climate Change and Resource Use) seeks to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, among other
methods, by concentrating development in cities and towns and improving public transport and facilities for walking and cycling.

_Leeds City Region Local Enterprise Partnership Plan - ‘Realising the Potential’ 2011 (ref: LSSE.D3)_

2.4.9 This outlines various strategic priorities to be addressed in order to fulfil the LEP aim for Leeds to become ‘A world-leading dynamic and sustainable low carbon economy that balances economic growth with a high quality of life for everyone.’ The fourth strategic priority ‘creating the environment for growth’ is the most relevant to this project and focuses on creating an environment for growth which includes establishing the physical infrastructure to connect business and workforce to opportunities and to each other (page10).

_Leeds City Region DaSTS Connectivity Study, Phase 1:2010 (ref: LSSE.D4)_

2.4.10 In looking at the challenges the city faces (page 7), the second goal of this report aims to support economic growth. It suggests that one way of doing this is to reduce productive time by maintaining or improving the reliability of journeys and to improve access and connectivity to labour markets in key business centres. Transport improvements are also required to support sustainable provision of housing.

_My Journey West Yorkshire, West Yorkshire Local Transport Plan 2011– 2026 (ref: LSSE D18)_

2.4.11 In setting out a vision for transport in West Yorkshire over the next 15 years this report seeks:

“to ensure West Yorkshire’s transport system connects people and places in ways that support the economy, the environment and quality of life”.

One objective is to improve connectivity to support economic activity and growth in the West Yorkshire and the Leeds City Region. Specifically, the ‘Enhancements’ programme (5.7.4), dealing with priorities for the next three years, refers directly to plans for a new entrance to Leeds City Station as one of the main projects that will realise the objectives of this plan.

_The Leeds City Council Unitary Development Plan 2001 (reviewed 2006) (ref: LSSE D5)_

2.4.12 A number of policies in the UDP were ‘saved’ under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act and currently provide the basis for decisions regarding land use and planning applications.

_Policy SA9 (Aspirations for the City Centre) _seeks to promote the development of the city centre to support Leeds’ aspiration to become one of the principal cities of Europe. In the same vein _Policy SA6 (Leisure & Tourism) _aims to promote Leeds as a tourist destination. The need for physical and economic regeneration within urban areas is also highlighted in _Policy
SA7 (Urban Regeneration). In planning the growth of the city centre the plan states that the main pressures are to the south where developments are already focussing (13.2.2).

2.4.13 There are several policies which see improvements in transport infrastructure as a way of encouraging this to happen. Policy SA4 (Local Economy) explicitly seeks to promote and strengthen the economic base of Leeds, among other ways by co-ordination of the provision of necessary infrastructure and Policy SP8 (City Centre Policy) sees transport improvements as one way of enhancing the role of the city centre.

2.4.14 In relation to encouraging sustainable forms of travel, Policy SP3 (Development Location Strategy) suggests that new development should be concentrated within or adjoining main urban areas that are well-served by public transport, in order to maximise the potential of existing and proposed infrastructure. Policy SA2 (Transport) similarly seeks to encourage development in locations that will reduce the need for travel. It also promotes the use of public transport and other than by the car.

2.4.15 Policy SP4 (Transport Priorities) confirms that priority in the introduction of new transport infrastructure will be given to supporting public transport. The benefits of alternatives to the car are developed further in Policy T1 (Transport Investment Policy) which among other aims, states that investment will be directed towards:

- improving the quality and provision made for alternative modes to the car (and lorry) and by improving facilities for public transport and other sustainable modes including walking and cycling .... ;
- promoting social inclusion – by improving facilities for people with impaired mobility; improving access for people from deprived communities and securing personal safety for transport users; and
- encouraging the greater integration between travel modes through support for better interchange between and within travel modes and measures which broaden the range and opportunity for journeys to be made by public transport

The Publication Draft Core Strategy February 2012 (Appendix 1)

2.4.16 This document is at pre-submission stage and will go to examination in public early next year, with the intention of it being adopted in late 2013. It is therefore material to the application, albeit of reduced weight compared to the adopted parts of the development plan. Objectives reflecting its spatial vision include giving priority to the development opportunities in the southern half of the city (Objective 2), in addition to Objective 15:

“increase the use of sustainable forms of transport by facilitating the delivery of new infrastructure and the improvement and management of the existing system, transport hubs and interchange (including Leeds City Station)”.
This is also reflected in Spatial Policy 11 Transport Infrastructure Investment Priorities and in Spatial Policy 3 which looks at the role of Leeds city centre as an economic driver for district and region.

2.4.17 Paragraph 4.9.10 states that:

“A new Southern Entrance at Leeds City Station, improvements to the station concourse, and planned capacity improvements (to enable a greater frequency of services) will greatly enhance this infrastructure at the heart of the transport hub”.

Most particularly paragraph 5.1.18 suggests that the City Centre South offers huge potential for development of offices, leisure uses, parkland and housing and possibly in the longer term further high street shopping and:

“the anticipated opening of the southern entrance to Leeds City Station will help to reinforce the centrality of the southern half of Leeds city centre”

Supplementary Planning Documents

2.4.18 In addition to the UDP and Core Strategy, there are a number of Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) and Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) as well as other strategies adopted by the City Council, for the area south of Leeds city centre, which are relevant to the proposed development. These documents provide a more detailed explanation of how strategic policies might be practically implemented. Several briefs have been produced by the Council to encourage further redevelopment, for example for the South Bank and Sovereign Street sites (both dated 2011).

2.4.19 Beeston Hill and Holbeck are identified as target areas for large scale improvements within the Holbeck Urban Village (HUV) Revised Planning Framework which was adopted as SPD in February 2006 (ref: LSSE.D10). This sets out the planning and design framework for the regeneration of this historically important area which has many gap sites or underutilised land and includes many buildings in poor condition. Proposals include creating new opportunities for employment, living and leisure including a new creative quarter based on new media and digital technologies with 5,000 new jobs.

2.4.20 The Leeds Waterfront Strategy was adopted in 2002 and was the subject of a partial review in 2006 to form the Biodiversity and Waterfront Development SPD (ref: LSSE.D9). This encompasses approximately 6.5km of the river and canal corridor running through central Leeds, formed by the Aire & Calder Navigation and the Leeds and Liverpool Canal (including the study area) and provides a framework to guide new development on sites adjacent to the waterways.
2.4.21 These documents emphasise the opportunities for regeneration in areas to the south of Leeds city centre and the need for good pedestrian and cycle way links into the centre as one way of helping to achieve this.

2.5 Regeneration and sustainability benefits of the Scheme

2.5.1 Looking first at the two regeneration objectives of the LSSE Scheme:

- to maximise growth of the Leeds economy by enhancing its competitive position and facilitating its future employment and population growth;
- to support and facilitate the sustainable growth of Leeds, in particular to the south, recognising the importance of its city centre to the future economy of the Leeds City region;

The NPPF emphasises a presumption in favour of development provided sustainability principles are not compromised (defined by statutory development plans). The Environmental Proof of Evidence (ref LSSE.PTE/P/5.1) and later parts of this proof will show that sustainability principles are satisfied by the proposals.

2.5.2 Regional and local policy aims to develop Leeds’ role as a city of European status by accommodating significant growth in jobs, homes and related services. A key plank of this policy is the regeneration of the southern part of Leeds city centre which is seen as having potential for expansion of housing and businesses.

2.5.3 Recent work undertaken as part of the ‘Transport for Leeds’ programme of studies has estimated that jobs in the city centre as a whole will increase from around 102,000 in 2009 to 108,000 in 2018 and to 118,000 by 2030 (+16%). It is stated that most new jobs are likely to be located in the expanding southern part of the city centre. Similarly it is estimated by the emerging Core Strategy that that the city centre has sufficient space to accommodate 10,000 or so new residential units, most of which will also be located towards the south.

2.5.4 National, regional and local policy supports the premise that transport investment is one way of supporting development growth. The shorter and more attractive journey offered by the proposed LSSE Scheme, for passengers travelling to and from the south, will be of benefit to businesses in the south of the city centre, assisting workers and visitors and helping to attract staff.

2.5.5 This will also provide encouragement for new businesses to set up in the area and increased footfall near to the proposed site has the potential to attract further service sector businesses to this vicinity. Moreover, the LSSE Scheme will relieve current passenger congestion in the station at peak times and so contribute more widely to ongoing development. In addition the Scheme will be of benefit to current and future residents travelling to and from the station and help to attract new development in the form of residential units.
2.5.6 Appendix 2 includes a number of letters of support for the scheme. A letter from the Chair of the Leeds City Region LEP Board Neil McLean states:

“The new entrance as proposed would significantly reduce the access time to the station for commuters and businesses seeking faster, more seamless end to end journeys. For example businesses located to the south of the station could alone save some 5 minutes perhaps more in peak periods in their end to end journey to Manchester which coupled with other key investments such as electrification of the trans- Pennine line and full delivery of the northern Hub will be a key consideration including for international investors”

2.5.7 Councillor Richard Lewis on behalf of Leeds City Council has also written to say:

“Up to 20% of Leeds railway station passengers would benefit directly from the new entrance because it will improve connections between Leeds Station and the south of the city which in recent years has seen demand grow with the completion of major developments and regeneration projects. The entrance will also help to accommodate the predicted growth in rail passenger movements at the station.

This major transport project is urgently needed as it will encourage growth in the Leeds economy by enhancing competitive position and unlocking employment growth. The scheme is therefore vitally important for West Yorkshire and the Leeds region”.

2.5.8 Similar comments have been received from the Rt Hon Hilary Benn MP for Leeds Central, Further letters of support, particularly in relation to the benefits for Holbeck Urban Village, will be circulated at the Inquiry.

2.5.9 The third objective being addressed by this evidence is:

- to improve access to Leeds Station by sustainable means;

National, regional and local policy encourages the use of alternative forms of travel to the car by improving facilities for public transport and other sustainable modes - including walking and cycling. Policy also supports improvements to interchanges between travel modes and measures which broaden the opportunity for journeys to be made by public transport.

2.5.10 The improved accessibility to the station offered by the LSSE Scheme will encourage more people living or working in the south of the City to take the train for their journey and to walk and cycle there with commensurate benefits to health and ultimately the climate. It is estimated that 22-24% of passengers (approximately 20,000 passengers per day at current levels) would use the proposed southern entrance.
2.5.11 Relieving congestion at the northern entrance will also offer further inducement for people coming from the north to use this entrance. In recent work undertaken as part of the ‘Transport for Leeds’ programme of studies modal shift from car to rail is estimated to result in a reduction in car driver trips equal to 26% of the additional generated trips (approximately 130 car driver trips per day). In this respect the LSSE Scheme will make a substantial contribution towards a wider target for modal shift.

2.5.12 Therefore in terms of regeneration and strategic sustainability benefits, it is concluded that the Scheme satisfies national, regional and local policy. The next two sections of this evidence assess the impacts of the scheme at a local level to give a complete picture of the planning considerations.
3. Architecture, Urban Design, Conservation

3.1 Urban design considerations

3.1.1 The purpose of this section of the proof of evidence is to assess the LSSE Scheme in terms of the quality of its architecture in relation to its impact on its immediate surroundings, when viewed either from a distance or from close by. A building or structure is generally designed from two starting points:

- The constraints and opportunities offered by the site and surroundings (including where appropriate, heritage considerations); and
- Its function (which can also include the impression it creates) along with the pattern of circulation.

The evidence will show why the LSSE Scheme satisfies both of these requirements, focussing on visual aspects of urban design, including heritage. There are of course other factors that influence how a building and its surroundings are appreciated - such as dust and noise. These are covered in detail in the Environmental Proof of Evidence (ref LSSE.PTE/P/5.1) and are summarised with other environmental topics in Section 4.

3.1.2 In looking at urban design I will be referring to the quality of design of the proposed LSSE structure and public realm in which it sits, both during the day and at night time. My evidence will cover aspects such a setting, scale and massing, residential and passenger amenity, safety and security.

3.1.3 A number of objections have been raised to the draft Order material, mainly from the residents of Waterman’s Place and the Blue Apartments which sit on the adjacent river banks and I will be addressing these objections during the course the proof, in addition to a representation (which does not comprise an objection) from English Heritage.

This section firstly looks at policy considerations.

3.2 Urban design policy context

National Planning Policy Framework 2012 (ref: LSSE.D24)

3.2.1 Paragraph 58 states that in terms of good design planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments:

- 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;
establish a strong sense of place, using streetscapes and buildings to create attractive and comfortable places to live, work and visit;

- optimise the potential of the site to accommodate development……;

- respond to local character and history and reflect the identity of local surroundings and materials, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation;

- create safe and accessible environments where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine quality of life or community cohesion; and

- are visually attractive as a result of good architecture and appropriate landscaping.

3.2.2 Paragraph 60 states that although it is proper to seek to promote local distinctiveness, planning decisions should not attempt to impose architectural styles or to stifle innovation. Paragraph 61 suggests that securing high quality and inclusive design goes beyond aesthetic considerations. For instance, planning decisions should address the connections between people and places and the integration of new development into the natural, historic and built environment.

3.2.3 The strategy also advocates safe and accessible environments, legible pedestrian routes and high quality public space (para.69). Layouts should minimise the conflict between traffic and cyclists or pedestrians and consider the needs of people with disabilities (para.35).

3.2.4 It is stated that local planning authorities should describe the significance of any heritage assets affected including any contribution made by their setting, when determining applications (para 128). In weighing up applications that directly or indirectly affect a non designated heritage asset, a balanced judgment will be required having regard to the scale or any harm or loss and the significance of the asset (para 135).

Yorkshire and Humber Plan 2008 (ref: LSSE.D17)

3.2.5 Policy ENV9 (Historic Environment) of the Yorkshire and Humber Plan seeks to safeguard and enhance the historic environment, and ensure that historical context informs decisions about development and regeneration.

The Leeds City Council Unitary Development Plan 2001 (reviewed 2006) (ref: LSSE.D5)

3.2.6 There are a number of UDP policies dealing with design of new buildings. Important in this context is Policy CC3 (City Centre Character) which states that the identity and distinctive character of the city centre will be maintained by protecting building and styles but also by encouraging good innovative designs for new buildings and spaces and upgrading the environment.
Policy N13 (Design & New Buildings) states that the design of all new buildings should be of high quality and have regard to the character and appearance of their surroundings. Good contemporary design which is sympathetic or complementary to its setting will be welcomed.

Policy BD2 Vol 2 (Design & Siting of New Buildings): The design and siting of new buildings should complement and (where possible) enhance existing vistas, skylines and landmarks.

3.2.7 In respect of the wider environs:

UDP Policy N12 (Priorities for Urban Design) states that proposals for development should respect the following fundamental priorities for urban design:

- development should create a series of linked and varied spaces that are defined by buildings and landscape elements;
- the best buildings of the past should be retained. New buildings should be of good design in their own right as well as good neighbours;
- new developments should respect the character and scale of buildings and the routes that connect them;
- movement on foot and on bicycle should be encouraged;
- developments should assist people to find their way around with ease;
- developments should, where possible, be adaptable for other future uses;
- design and inclusion of facilities should reflect the needs of elderly people and of people with disabilities and restricted mobility;
- visual interest should be encouraged throughout; and
- development should be designed so as to reduce the risk of crime.

UDP Policy LD1 Vol 2 (Landscaping Schemes): Among other factors any landscape scheme should:

- reflect the scale and form of adjacent development and the character of the area;
- complement and avoid detraction from views, skylines and landmarks;
- provide suitable access for people with disabilities;
- provide visual interest at street level and as seen from surrounding buildings ... ;
- protect existing vegetation, including shrubs, hedges and trees; and
- complement existing beneficial landscape, ecological or architectural features and help integrate them as part of the development.

3.2.8 Amenity considerations are dealt with in:

UDP Policy BD5 Vol 2 (Amenity & New Buildings) which states that all new buildings should be designed with consideration given to both their own amenity and that of their surroundings (including privacy, daylight and sunlight).
3.2.9 With regard to development in conservation areas:

*UDP Policy N19 (Conservation Areas New Buildings)* requires that new buildings and extensions within or adjacent to Conservation Areas should preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the area by ensuring that:

- the siting and scale of the building is in harmony with the adjoining buildings and the area as a whole;
- detailed design of the buildings (including the roofscape) is such that the proportions of the parts relate to each other and to adjoining buildings...;
- the materials used are appropriate to the area and sympathetic to adjoining buildings...; and
- careful attention is given to the design and quality of boundary and landscape treatment.

3.2.10 There are a number of UDP policies which deal with the need for safe and accessible environments as follows:

*UDP Policy T5 (Pedestrian & Cycle Provision)*: Satisfactory safe and secure access and provision for pedestrians and cyclists will be required within highway schemes and new development.

*UDP Policy T6 (Provision for the Disabled)*: Satisfactory access and provision for disabled people and other people with mobility problems will be required within new development.

*UDP Policy SA8 (Access for All)* seeks to ensure that to ensure that all sections of the community, have safe and easy access to social and economic opportunities by maintaining and enhancing the current levels of provision in appropriate locations.

*UDP Policy A4 (Safety & Security Provision)*: Development should be designed to ensure a safe and secure environment, including proper consideration of access arrangements, treatment of public areas, service and maintenance requirements, materials and lighting, also external lighting of prominent buildings and their surroundings.

*Publication Core Strategy February 2012 (Appendix 1)*

3.2.11 *Objective 12 Place Making* supports high quality design and the positive use of the historic environment to create distinctive and cohesive places that include measures to improve community safety.

*Policy P10: Design* develops this further by stating that new development should be based on a thorough contextual analysis to provide good design appropriate to its scale and function. Proposals will be supported where they accord with the following key principles;
(i) The size, scale and layout of the development is appropriate to its location and respects the character and quality of the external spaces and the wider locality;

(ii) The development protects the visual, residential and general amenity of the area including usable space, privacy, noise, air quality and satisfactory penetration of daylight and sunlight;

(iii) The development protects and enhances the district’s historic assets - in particular existing natural site features, historically and locally important buildings, skylines and views;

(iv) (Car parking), cycle, (waste and recycling) storage are integral to the development;

(v) The development creates a safe and secure environment that reduces the opportunities for crime without compromising community cohesion; and

(vi) The development is accessible to all users.

3.2.12 With regard to conservation Policy P11: Conservation states that the historic environment, including locally significant undesignated assets and their settings, will be conserved. Development proposals will be expected to demonstrate a full understanding of historic assets affected. Innovative and sustainable construction which integrates with and enhances the historic environment will be encouraged.

**Supplementary Planning Documents**

3.2.13 *The Biodiversity and Waterfront Strategy SPD 2006 (ref: LSSE D9)* seeks to promote good design within the study area. New buildings and features should positively address the waterways as the focal point of the development. In particular, buildings should be innovative, sensitive to their particular location and respect the heights, mass and detailing of existing neighbouring buildings. New development should acknowledge and respect historic buildings and settings through the careful conservation and integration of these into new development schemes.

3.2.14 There is no conservation area appraisal for the conservation area. However, an area statement for the Granary Wharf area (prior to its construction) has been appended to the Holbeck Urban Village Revised Planning Framework SPD 2006 (ref: LSSE.D10). This refers to the strong northern edge to the conservation area, the presence of water and listed buildings. Relevant proposals include creating a significant public realm, enhancing planting and adding new buildings which are both excellent contemporary architecture and sympathetic to the scale and character of the surviving listed canal architecture. It is suggested that any new buildings should develop a modern architectural language that has waterside character. Each should have their own identity yet appear as different members of the same family.
3.2.15 There are a number of other design documents including *Neighbourhoods for Living 2003* (Appendix 3) Of relevance to the LSSE Scheme this gives traditional minimum guidelines on distance (which suggest a distance of 12m from ground floor living spaces to flank walls; 21m between habitable rooms). However it also states that it is inappropriate to apply these standards without further consideration especially of local character.

### 3.3 Characteristics of the site and area

#### Key site considerations

3.3.1 Both the Blue Apartments and Waterman’s Place buildings are built within 4m of the river bank and close to the arches. This has guided the siting of the Scheme so as to minimise any adverse impacts on these apartments in terms of an overdominant aspect, overlooking and overshadowing. It has also limited the area on the banks available for structural support.

3.3.2 There are a number of practical considerations which have influenced the design of the LSSE Scheme. This includes the Environment Agency’s (EA) requirement for flood risk to be taken into account and the need for any new structure not to impede the flow of the river. In addition the arches and existing station have limited additional load bearing capacity which suggests that any new structure must be substantially supported by other means.

#### Access points

3.3.3 The ground floor deck to the Blue Apartments removes the possibility of a future walkway along the east bank of the River Aire. On the western bank there is a footpath, 1.6m in width, alongside the ground floor retail unit at Waterman’s Place, but this is also used for servicing and is not an obvious approach route.

3.3.4 Access to the site can be achieved through the Dark Arches from Dark Neville Street. Dark Neville Street under the arches just north of the site (Figure 3.1) is a high vaulted space which has car parking located to either side of it within the station undercroft.

3.3.5 The most direct access from the south however is immediately in front of the Dark Arches from Granary Wharf to west and via Little Neville Street to the east. The access from Granary Wharf is adequate for its purpose. In the case of Little Neville Street however improvements are required, to effect a pleasant and safe approach to the LSSE site (see section 3.6).
Figure 3.1 Dark Neville Street looking west from Neville Street

Figure 3.2 Site in relation to nearby conservation areas
The character of the conservation area

3.3.6 The proposed LSSE Scheme site is located on the northern boundary of the (Central Area) Canal Wharf Conservation Area. The Conservation Area which encloses the river and canal is triangular in shape bounded by the railway to the north, Neville Street to the east and Canal Wharf to the south (Figure 3.2).

3.3.7 There are a number of listed structures within the locality which include the river lock and retaining walls to the River Aire (Grade II*); Canal Wharf (Grade II*) and Victoria Bridge (Grade II), although none of these impact on views of the site. The Dark Arches over the River Aire however are designated as a ‘locally designated heritage asset’.

3.3.8 The River Aire and Leeds and Liverpool Canal, its bridges and other features, represent the historic legacy of this area, which is largely urban in character with limited landscaping. In visual terms the area contains a mix of ages and styles of building ranging from low rise 18th and 19th century stone warehouses, to higher red brick Victorian edifices, to more recent multi storey offices and blocks of flats in brick or clad in a variety of materials and colours. It is the water therefore that binds this area together rather than the buildings, which are extremely varied in style, height and appearance. Nowhere is this more apparent than in the vicinity of the site (Figure 3.3). The view shown below also suggests that there is an opportunity for the design to capitalise on views of the river.

Figure 3.3 View from Dark Arches north
The setting of the site

3.3.9 Close views of the site are available from the pedestrian bridge and more oblique views are afforded from the river banks and nearby apartments. The River Aire which flows rapidly under the Dark Arches is a prominent feature in the setting of the site. The Dark Arches built in the 1860s rise to roughly the second storey floor of the adjacent flats (Figure 3.4). Three large arches and part of a smaller arch span the river (within the latter is an electricity substation). The arches sit on stone plinths and are constructed in red brick with alternating rows of headers and stretchers. The facade is relatively plain with a chamfered stone corbel at the springing point of the arches and shallow corbelling consisting of four courses of brickwork between the arches and parapet. Four bands of headers form each arch.

3.3.10 Above the arches sit the rather incongruous grey clad walls of the station which was rebuilt in the 1960s. For most of this stretch of viaduct these are one storey high but towards the east they rise to two storeys, plus the equivalent of a further storey in the form of a curved roof. Also prominent in the setting of the site is the pedestrian bridge some 30m downstream. This is finished in white and visually bisects the arches behind it.

Figure 3.4 Dark Arches with nearby pedestrian bridge
3.3.11 Waterman’s Place residential apartments, part of Granary Wharf to the west of the proposed Scheme (Figure 3.5) rises in steps from 4 to 8 to 11 to 15 storeys as it nears the arches, with a part colonnaded ground floor containing restaurants. The building is mainly in red brick but upper floors are clad in timber. Large bronze coloured windows are separated by timber panels and projecting part glazed balconies are framed in copper cladding. The building was in the course being occupied on 4th March 2010 when the original LSSE planning application was considered by the LCC Plans Panel City Centre.

Fig. 3.5 Waterman’s Place

3.3.12 The Blue Apartments, located on the eastern bank of the river, were completed in 2009 and are also stepped, rising over 8/10/12/16 storeys (Figures 3.6 and 3.7). The appearance of this building however is very different from its neighbour across the water. The main facade is curved and on the ground level the golf shop and restaurant includes a private deck which cantilevers over the river wall. The ground floor is in red brick or fully glazed. Upper floors are clad in cream coloured stacked bonding with dark projecting balconies and small square windows. Top levels are fully glazed and serrated. Next to the arches vertical elements are clad in blue.
3.3.13 There is a clear view of the Dark Arches from near to Victoria Bridge some 180m down river (Figure 3.8). This shows a white clad office building with large glazed areas on the east bank, which in the main obscures the view of the Blue Apartments. Other buildings on the west bank include a five storey Victorian stone warehouse and modern red brick block – again a variety of ages and style of building. More of the station buildings above the site and buildings to the rear of this are also in view.

3.3.14 Viewed from this distance the Arches are dwarfed by the adjacent buildings, but equally these frame the view to provide an opportunity to create a focal point in this location. Two approaches might properly be taken to the design of any structure placed in front of the Dark Arches:

- To treat the structure as an extension to the arches in terms of its style and materials; or
- To provide a building which contrasts in style and materials with the backdrop of the arches and is “detached” visually from the structure.

It is considered that the second of these approaches will better suit the varied surroundings and retain the visual integrity of the Dark Arches, while at the same time providing a strong focal point.
3.3.15 In summary practical and visual considerations arising from an assessment of the site and area are:

- The lack of space available on both east and west banks of the River Aire in this location, resulting in the choice of a structural solution within the water course;
- The need to consider the amenities of residents in the adjacent Blue Apartments and Waterman's Place;
- The need to take into account of the potential for flooding and not to impede flow of the river;
- The most direct access points to the site from Granary Wharf and Neville Street;
- The opportunity to provide views down river for those using the facility;
- A mix of heights and styles of buildings within the Canal Wharf Conservation Area suggesting that a contrasting design would not be inappropriate here;
- The opportunity for the LSSE Scheme to create a focal point when seen from near Victoria Bridge; and
- The need to retain the visual integrity of the Dark Arches by separating the Scheme visually and structurally from the edifice.
3.4 **Design rationale**

3.4.1 The primary function of the LSSE Scheme is to provide a main access and egress point to Leeds City Station from the south. The Scheme will link to the ticketing facilities on the upper level and provide a route for pedestrians and cyclists that is:

- easy to find and use;
- as direct as possible;
- attractive;
- safe; and
- DDA compliant

In addition an “iconic” design has been sought, which will not only enhance this location but also provide a landmark in keeping with Leeds’ desire to be a major European City and tourist attraction.

3.4.2 As a co-promoter of the scheme, the design progression of LSSE has followed Network Rail’s process called “Governance for Railway Investment Projects” (GRIP). GRIP is a company standard that describes how Network Rail manages and controls projects that enhance or renew the national rail network. There are eight GRIP stages as outlined below:

1. Output definition;
2. Pre-feasibility;
3. Option selection;
4. Single option development;
5. Detailed design;
6. Construction test & commission;
7. Scheme hand back; and
8. Project close out.

The design which has been developed up to GRIP 4, forms the basis of the previous planning application submitted to LCC in October 2009 (reference 09/04625/FU) and current TWAO application.

3.4.3 Metro has undertaken various consultation exercises both for the previous planning application and this TWAO application. This consultation process aimed to help ensure that all those who wished to do so have had the opportunity to express their views on the proposals and every effort has been made to take these comments on board where practical to do so. The description below has taken into account policy objectives for good design outlined in the previous section and has used the former CABE “Design at appeal” guidance to explain how the design satisfies policy considerations.
3.4.4 **Amount:** Large scale plans, sections and elevations of the scheme are shown as (ref. 09/04625/FU sheets 2, 3, 4, 5, 6). The quantity of development is not substantial (approximately 862m² on three floors, including vertical elements).

3.4.5 **Layout:** The location of the structure has optimised the potential of the site in line with NPPF guidelines. The structure sits in the centre of the river supported on piers which extend from the central arch. This also helps to avoid disruption to the flow of the river. At ground level, the main structure and link under the arches is enclosed, with doors to the new footbridge along Dark Neville Street and to the two connecting bridges just south of the arches.

3.4.6 **Legibility:** Access points are easy to find and elements of the vertical circulation will be visible on approach by foot to the building and from within the station making the purpose of the Scheme clearly legible to passengers. The design has also sought to maximise the experience of passengers arriving and leaving by offering them contrasting views out along the river towards Bridgewater Place and back into the vaults of the Dark Arches.

3.4.7 **Response to character and scale of the surrounding area:** Figures 3.9 and 3.10 provide a visual depiction of the structure viewed from the south-east and south-west respectively (the latter view taken from the station platform). Figure 3.11 provides a view from Victoria Bridge. The main enclosure takes the form of an arched hood or canopy framing a three storey glazed panel on the south elevation. The roof rises but also tapers to a point at its northern end, where it joins the existing roof of the station. The form of the roof complements the existing curved roof to the station as well as the arches and vaults that form the viaduct.

3.4.8 The scale of the structure has been cleverly reduced visually by its curved form and detailing. The eastern elevation steps back to allow for a glazed lift shaft facing south. There are two narrower glazed strips facing north on the western façade and glazed strips on either side adjacent to the arches. These and the form of the roof also help to separate the structure visually from the adjacent viaduct and station such that it “reads” as being independent of these.

3.4.9 **Respect for the historic asset:** Detaching structural elements has allowed for a clear and elegant structural solution which respects the physical and visual integrity of the Dark Arches. The canopy in terms of its height helps to link the arches with the station which sits above it and the innovative design provides a contrast to the plain and rather severe backdrop of the arches (see next section).

3.4.10 **Visual interest:** In addition to its unusual form the canopy will be clad in gold coloured shingles (material to be agreed) that will patinate, weather well and reflect light. This will provide a strong focal point especially when viewed from downstream and represents a truly innovative architectural statement in keeping for Leeds’ desire for international recognition.
3.4.11 *Night-time interest*: Low level downlighting will be used to wash pedestrian surfaces without causing glare. Minimising the impact of lighting on bats will also be a necessary consideration in the lighting design. The southern glazed facade will reveal the lit entrance hall at night without affecting the adjacent apartments and the gold coloured shingles will reflect and catch light from the adjacent buildings.

3.4.12 *Residential amenity*: The structure has been kept as narrow and low as possible, commensurate with operational needs and glazing has been angled and treated so as to avoid overlooking (see next section).

3.4.13 *Designing out crime*: The existing CCTV system within the station will be expanded to incorporate new CCTV cameras to be installed within and around the new southern entrance affixed to the new/existing structure, dependent on location. The design also ensures that all spaces will be overlooked by either the station users or by the apartments on both sides of the river, to increase a sense of safety for users of the site.

3.4.14 *Inclusive access*: The Scheme has been designed to be DDA compliant. Although the height of the ground level has been raised to comply with EA flood risk requirements, ramps between the arches to the east and west provide step free access. Internal and external signs will be designed to Network Rail standards to provide easy way finding and information for all, including the visually impaired. Both internal and external furniture will be designed to contrast with the background for ease of recognition, as well as being located so as to not impact on pedestrian flows. Help points will be incorporated at appropriate locations within the new entrance.

3.4.15 *Robustness of materials* Cladding and external materials chosen are hardwearing and will require minimal maintenance. Surfaces and steps to the linking bridges and footways will be formed from a sandstone type material and bridges will have robust structural glass balustrades

3.4.16 *Maintenance*: Maintenance has been considered as part of the design and where possible, self - cleaning glass has been employed. Occasional cleaning to the glazed front will be carried out from the ground floor deck of the western footbridge (not accessible to the public). Other maintenance will be carried out by cradle. External flooring will occasionally be jet washed and the area will be kept free of litter. In this way the structure and surroundings will be kept pristine at all times.

3.4.17 *Sustainable construction*: The two major energy uses in the Scheme are escalators and lighting. An energy efficient design will be employed to Network Rail’s own stringent guidelines.
Figure 3.9 Visualisation of the Leeds station Southern Entrance (GRIP 4 design)

Source: Metro

Figure 3.10 Visualisation: showing the extension of the existing western footbridge

Source: Metro
3.5 Objections and representations

*Issues of over-dominance, privacy, litter, security and maintenance*

3.5.1 A number of objections have been raised to the proposals mainly from the residents of the neighbouring Waterman’s Place and the Blue Apartments. Their visual concerns centre on the height and massing of the proposed structure, its impact on views (in terms of over-dominance), privacy, daylight and sunlight. There are also several objections regarding potential litter, wear and tear to the environs and security.

3.5.2 A series of meetings have been held with LCC regarding possible effects of the structure on adjacent properties, notably the Blue Apartments and Waterman’s Place. As part of the continuing discussions the design has been refined to minimise the impact of the enclosure on its surroundings.

3.5.3 Looking first at the question of size and impact on views, the height of the proposed three level building from ground level rises by some 13m at its southern tip to 23m over the station - sufficient to achieve the platform level of the station and roughly level with the fifth - seventh floor of the adjacent flats. In comparison it is dwarfed by the adjacent apartments, most of
whose windows and balconies will look over the top of the structure (which is why the shape of the roof and its material is important). It projects 15.2m on the upper level and 17.2m at ground level from the arches southwards and in this respect only directly affects living spaces (a living room and two bedrooms) in the first flat adjacent to the arches in the Waterman’s Place (five flats in all). In the Blue Apartments it affects a living room and one bedroom in the 5 flats nearest to the arches and two bedrooms in the adjacent flats (5 flats).

3.5.4 For those affected properties, the Scheme has been carefully designed to maximise the distance to windows. The lift shafts are the most critical element in terms of both width and height. These have been located as close as possible to the existing viaduct allowing for access. The southernmost wall of the lift shaft is the point at which the canopy reduces in width to line through with the northern edge of the bay window of the first flat next to arches in the Blue Apartments. The Scheme then steps back in plan and section to enclose other less critical elements on both flanks. In effect therefore the canopy has been moulded as tightly as possible around the internal elements.

3.5.5 The glazed features will also add interest to the appearance of the structure and “break up” the façade helping to reduce the visual impact of the development. In addition, by curving the structure in plan and section the design has endeavoured to restrict the amount of overshadowing to a minimum whilst also attempting to reflect as much light as possible into these apartments and reduce the impression of side walls in shadow.

3.5.6 It is important to note that there are no minimum distance standards by which impact on residential amenity is assessed in the city centre where the approach has always been to consider each case on its merits (albeit this generally applies to existing buildings which are being converted). This was pointed out in the LCC application report to the Plans Panel City Centre 4th March 2010 (Appendix 4) paragraph 10.4(a) which gave the original and almost identical scheme planning permission. The distance to the wall of the lift shaft looking directly out of the closest living room window of the Blue Apartments is a minimum distance of 8.2m from the flank wall. The lift shaft cuts back, so for most of this window and the three adjacent bedroom windows the distance to the flank wall of the LSSE structure is between 10.2m and 11.6m. The distance in the case of Waterman’s Place is between 11.8m and 12.2m (which incidentally just about complies with traditional standards of 12m to flank walls for suburban areas in Leeds). It is clear therefore that the most affected properties in this respect are the five flats in the Blue Apartments adjacent to the arches.

3.5.7 The Environmental Proof of Evidence (ref LSSE.PTE/P/5.1) deals in detail with the issue of sunlight and daylight. In brief, the evidence indicates that some of the test panels identified on the residential properties in the Blue Apartment building adjacent to the arches, are likely to have an adverse reduction in direct daylight, particularly below the third storey. However the study also points out that the access to direct daylight is inherently limited to these properties due to overshadowing by the Waterman’s Place building to the west of the Scheme. In
relation to sunlight, the evidence indicates that residential properties in the Blue Apartment building are likely to experience a minor reduction in direct sunlight. Access to direct sunlight is again inherently limited to these properties, due to overshadowing by Waterman’s Place Apartments.

3.5.8 Turning to the question of privacy, no windows in the proposed LSSE structure face directly into the apartments and surface treatment to larger windows will ensure that there are no oblique views into these from the Scheme by means of a controlled moiré interference pattern.

3.5.9 In summary therefore, no flats would be affected by overlooking. Most of the flats in Waterman’s Place and the Blue Apartments will not be adversely affected by the proposals in terms of visual impact, daylight and sunlight. Some flats in the Blue Apartments do experience some adverse impacts, but these are not considered to cause unacceptable issues - particularly as the impact has been softened by the treatment of the facades to the Scheme and availability of sunlight and daylight is restricted by the opposite apartments. The distances between habitable rooms and flank walls of the Scheme are not unusual in urban locations and given this inner city location are considered to be acceptable.

3.5.10 In respect of other objections there will also be regular maintenance of LSSE external areas and litter collection. (The Promoters of the Scheme have entered into discussions with ISIS, the managing agents of Waterman’s Place, regarding a service charge subsidy for their common areas). Moreover, CCTV and the fact that areas are overlooked will provide for a secure environment.

**Impact on heritage**

3.5.11 There is also an objection from a resident and a representation (though not an objection) from English Heritage regarding the impact of the scheme on the Dark Arches (a locally designated heritage asset) and on the Conservation Area. The main concern is the scale and massing of the structure which it is asserted could affect the visual and physical integrity of the Dark Arches and destroy a prominent view.

3.5.12 In answer to these comments, the proposed enclosure will be no wider than the central arch and piers (the width of the structure varies from 8-14m). This means that more than two thirds of this stretch of viaduct (one arch to the east and two arches to the west) will remain in direct view, quite sufficient to show the backdrop of the arches against which the LSSE Scheme will sit. Moreover there will be oblique views of the arches continuing on dry land in each direction.

3.5.13 The setting of the Dark Arches has unfortunately already been somewhat compromised by the sixties station building which sits above them and by the white pedestrian bridge 30m downstream which visually “bisects” the arches. Moreover the structure is overwhelmed in terms of its height by the 15 and 16 storey apartments to either side of it. In these
circumstances it is considered that a very strong statement is required to provide a focal point for these disparate elements, which define the character of this conservation area.

3.5.14 The LSSE Scheme has therefore been deliberately designed to read as an independent and innovative structure in terms of its appearance - an attractive focal point flanked by the large residential blocks on the east and west banks and contrasting with the severity of the backdrop of Dark Arches. In this context it is my view that the Scheme will preserve the visual and physical integrity of the Dark Arches and the character of the conservation area, while at the same time providing an exciting and innovative landmark for Leeds.

3.5.15 Notwithstanding this, it is suggested that to compensate for concerns expressed by English Heritage about the obscuration of the arches, a condition regarding floodlighting could be introduced to highlight the arches at night-time, subject to protection of residents and bats from light pollution. The arches could also be deep cleaned.

3.5.16 The Cultural Heritage Technical Appendix (ref: 15-IV-10) concludes that the LSSE Scheme will have a significant beneficial effect within the Canal Wharf Conservation Area. The high quality, striking design of the proposed scheme has been assessed as an improvement resulting in a minor beneficial effect on the overall setting including the Dark Arches.

**Proposed Conditions**

3.5.17 The following proposed conditions (ref: doc.13) are of relevance to the Section 3.5 above:

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of five years from the date of this permission.

   Reason: imposed pursuant to the provisions of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004

2. The development permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following plans and drawings:
   a) Deposited plans and sections sheet No1 of 2 – Location Plan
   b) Deposited plan and directions sheet 2 of 2
   c) Traffic regulations and rights of way plan Sheet No 1 of 1
   d) Planning Direction drawings sheets 1 to 6

3. No building works shall take place until details and samples of all external materials, including a mock up of the large to smaller format tiles junctions and glass to cladding junctions, have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Such materials shall be made available on site prior to the commencement of their use, for the
inspection of the Local Planning Authority who shall be notified in writing of their availability. The building works shall be constructed from the materials thereby approved.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity, the character and appearance of the conservation area, and the setting of the nearby listed building.

4. No building works shall take place until full 1:20/1:10 details of the following have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority:

   a) Details of the glass balustrade and cladding to the deck/bridge detail.
   b) Details of the leading edge and return of the canopy.
   c) Details of the glazed slots in the west elevation.
   d) Details of the roof light to cladding junction.
   e) Details of the cladding panel formats and junctions between different sizes.
   f) Details of glazing systems.

The works shall be carried out in accordance with the details thereby approved, and retained as such thereafter.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity, the character and appearance of the conservation area, and the setting of the nearby listed building.

5. No building works shall take place until details and samples of all surfacing materials have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Such materials shall be made available on site prior to the commencement of their use, for the inspection of the Local Planning Authority who shall be notified in writing of their availability. The surfacing works shall be constructed from the materials thereby approved and retained as such thereafter.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity, the character and appearance of the conservation area, and the setting of the nearby listed building.

6. No building works shall take place until a scheme detailing the proposed lighting for the development site, including its phasing, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved scheme and thereafter retained and maintained for the lifetime of the development.

Reason: In the interests of residential amenity.

11. Unless otherwise agreed in writing, prior to the first use of the station access, details of the provision of pedestrian signage to the southern access from agreed routes and CCTV coverage in the vicinity of the development shall be submitted to and approved in writing by
the Local Planning Authority. Works in connection with the above shall be carried out prior to the first use of the station access, and retained as such thereafter unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of pedestrian connectivity and community safety

13. No building works shall take place until details of facilities to be provided for the parking of up to 20 cycles which belong to members of the public have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The details shall include the method of securing the cycles and their location. The approved facilities shall then be provided prior to the building being brought into use and thereafter retained unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In order to meet the aims of the Transport Policy as incorporated in the Leeds Unitary Development Plan.

It is considered that these conditions (and conditions detailed in subsequent sections) meet the tests of DOE Circular 11/95 as being necessary, relevant enforceable, precise and reasonable.

### 3.6 Little Neville Street

3.6.1 Intended improvements to Little Neville Street are being dealt with outside the scope of the TWA Order. With regard to vehicular traffic, the general approach is to create an entrance aimed primarily at pedestrians. To this end it is proposed to pedestrianise the Little Neville Street route except for necessary local vehicles, by means of a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO).

3.6.2 This will prevent the street being used as a drop off point for the station with attendant problems of turning in this relatively tight space, which would also be intimidating for pedestrians. Moreover queuing vehicles could also block legitimate access for residents and the Hilton hotel. It should be noted that there is an existing drop off point on the north side of the station for vehicles travelling from the south and this is only a few minutes away. The Traffic Access and Urban Realm Report (ref: 15-IV-9) gives more detail of what is proposed.

3.6.3 The attached Figures 3.12 and 3.13 show Little Neville Street as it currently exists and Figure 3.14 shows a plan of the proposed enhancements. Safety has been a prime concern in the design of the Scheme. A demarcated 3m wide pedestrian route /safe route is proposed along the south side of Little Neville Street. Although not part of the Scheme it is suggested that this route could eventually be extended through the viaduct along the south side of Dark Neville Street to where it joins Neville Street. Further safety measures will include additional lighting and tactile paving for assisting visually impaired users.
3.6.4 It is intended to use a mix of high quality surfacing including reuse of existing basalt setts - laid in a diagonal pattern (as requested by LCC). Existing bollards will be maintained in the southern portion of Little Neville Street to protect cellars. In addition there will be high quality signage, street lighting and street furniture, with some planting in the widened area to the north of the street. An at grade crossing is proposed at the exit of the Little Neville Street as part of LCC main capital programme.

Figure 3.12 Little Neville St seen from Neville St.  

Figure 3.13 Little Neville St looking north

3.6.5 There have been no objections to the visual changes proposed for Little Neville Street. Most objections centre on the danger of vehicles being attracted into the street to drop off passengers, although several objections are in fact opposed to traffic restrictions (dealt within the Highways and Public Rights of Way proof of evidence (ref LSSE.PTE/P/6.1). The TRO will be strictly enforced to prevent unauthorised vehicles from entering the street.

3.6.6 There are number of other concerns relating to security which are addressed by the previous section. In summary, it is considered that these improvements will result in an attractive and safe main entry point to the LSSE Scheme from Neville Street.
3.6.7 The following proposed condition is of relevance to the proposals above (ref:doc.13):

5. No building works shall take place until details and samples of all surfacing materials have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Such materials shall be made available on site prior to the commencement of their use, for the inspection of the Local Planning Authority who shall be notified in writing of their availability. The surfacing works shall be constructed from the materials thereby approved and retained as such thereafter.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity, the character and appearance of the conservation area, and the setting of the nearby listed building.
11. Unless otherwise agreed in writing, prior to the first use of the station access, details of
the provision of pedestrian signage to the southern access from agreed routes and CCTV
coverage in the vicinity of the development shall be submitted to and approved in writing by
the Local Planning Authority. Works in connection with the above shall be carried out prior to
the first use of the station access, and retained as such thereafter unless otherwise agreed in
writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of pedestrian connectivity and community safety

12. The highway and public realm works shown on drawing 296480-SKE-014-P3 shall be
constructed before the new railway station entrance is opened to the public.

Reason: In the interests of community safety, visual amenity and vehicular and pedestrian
safety

3.7 Water Lane Site

3.7.1 A request for a direction as to deemed planning permission as part of the main application,
has been submitted to the Secretary of State for the Water Lane site. An application has also
been made for conservation area consent which is also dealt with here. The site is to be used
for loading/unloading barges during the course of construction.

3.7.2 The site lies to the east of the LSSE main site (ref: 09/04625/FU planning direction drawings
sheet 1of 6). It is bounded to the north and west by the Aire and Calder Navigation, to the
south by a multi-storey and surface car park and to the east by former warehouse buildings
and Meadow Lane.

3.7.3 The site is located within the Leeds City Centre Conservation Area (a rather amorphous area
in terms of its character which stretches north of the station) and is next to a Grade II listed
building. It comprises an area of car parking, a stone arch and low wall remaining from a
previous warehouse building, scrub land over the remains of basements and a canal tow path.

3.7.4 It is proposed to dismantle the arch and wall at the site; these are remnants of a building which
was similar to the adjacent listed buildings (Figures 3.15 and 3.16). The arch and adjacent wall
will then be reinstated once the construction is completed and therefore there will no impact on
the character of this Conservation Area.

3.7.5 A letter from the Leeds Civic Trust has suggested that when the arch is rebuilt any work
should not make it “pristine” (ie making it safe rather than completing it) and the opportunity
should be taken to enhance the area. They also ask that the public route be maintained
during the course of the works even if diverted. These requests have been agreed by the
applicants.
3.7.6 **UDP Policy N19 (Conservation Areas New Buildings)** requires that new buildings and extensions within or adjacent to Conservation Areas should preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the area. It is considered that the measures proposed will preserve the character of the Conservation Area.

3.7.7 With reference to the above a condition is proposed as follows (ref Doc 13):

20. Before any works to demolish the structure in Water Lane are undertaken a method statement for the dismantling and reinstatement of the archway shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the LPA. The approved method statement shall be implemented in accordance with the timescale therein.

3.7.8 In addition it is understood that heads of terms regarding access are to be agreed with ASDA and the nearby Red Lion pub as part of the TWAO. These applications are therefore recommended to you for planning permission and conservation area consent.

Figure 3.15 Adjacent listed building

Figure 3.16 Arch and wall to be rebuilt later


## 4 Planning Assessment

### 4.1 Other environmental considerations

4.1.1 Although the Environmental Proof of Evidence (ref LSSE.PTE/P/5.1) has dealt with the detail of other environmental factors the findings are summarised here to provide a complete picture of the issues to be considered by this planning evidence. They are briefly as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Construction</th>
<th>Operation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Air quality</strong></td>
<td>Network Rail’s Contract Requirements – Environment (CR-E) documentation, will include the formulation of a Register of Consents and Commitments, which requires the appointed construction contractor to implement Best Practicable Means (BPM) for the control of dust and other emissions to the atmosphere. The effects on air quality arising from the scheme during the construction phase are considered to be a temporary minor adverse.</td>
<td>Mitigation includes pedestrianisation of Little Neville Street. There are no significant residual effects.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ecology</strong></td>
<td>Mitigation includes undertaking works in accordance with the Environment Agency's Pollution Prevention Guidance Note 5 and undertaking a preconstruction check to avoid disturbance to possible roosting bats.</td>
<td>Careful positioning of lighting is required given the possibility of bats and otters. There are no significant residual effects.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Geology and soils</strong></td>
<td>Scoped out of the ES.</td>
<td>Assuming effective implementation of the incorporated mitigation measures, outlined in the technical appendix there are no significant residual effects.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Historic environment</strong></td>
<td>No archaeological mitigation is required The temporary nature of the effects during the construction phase (from the crane, scaffolding etc.) has been assessed as having a negligible effect on Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas.</td>
<td>Reorganisation of basalt setts on Little Neville Street is considered to have a significant adverse residual effect* but the high quality design will have a beneficial significant effect on the conservation area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Townscape and Visual Amenity</strong></td>
<td>Effects on townscape and visual receptors are moderate adverse. Incorporated mitigation includes control of light pollution and management traffic. Footways will be diverted or kept open; graffiti,</td>
<td>The setting of Dark Arches will be changed but overall effect is minor beneficial in significance. Control of lighting required. (Daylight and sunlight considerations are included in para 3.5.8 of the main text).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental Consideration</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Implications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dust and litter control</td>
<td>Access to public realm will be affected and the crane will be visible but the effect will be insignificant given the urban surroundings.</td>
<td>With effective implementation of the incorporated mitigation measures, such as the preparation of a noise and vibration plan and working in accordance with BS5228, no significant residual effects are predicted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noise and vibration</td>
<td>An EMP will be produced and implemented by the appointed construction contractor. The effects have been assessed as mostly slight or moderate adverse during the daytime and slight adverse/neutral for when very occasional night time works are considered necessary.</td>
<td>Long term economic effects from further footfall are assessed as moderate beneficial**. There is also provision for cyclists.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Socio-economics            | Access to residential properties and businesses will be maintained throughout the construction phase. Disturbance is assessed as moderate to minor adverse, offset by minor beneficial effects from increased economic activity. Supplementary mitigation is proposed in the form of help points. | |}
| Traffic and access         | Implementation of the Construction Traffic Management Plan is required to minimise disruption. The effect of road closures on Little Neville Street are potentially significant. | The Scheme will improve pedestrian accessibility and provide stepped and step-free access to Leeds City Station from and to the south of the city. This will result in a beneficial significant effect. |
| Water resources            | A flood risk assessment has been carried out | The ground level of the Scheme has been raised to comply with EA requirements and a number of conditions introduced. There are no significant residual effects. |

* Reorganisation of basalt setts on Little Neville Street has been agreed in principal with LCC

** This deals with short term effects only.

4.1.2 The above suggests that although there may be some inevitable disturbance during construction, with mitigation, most long term effects outlined above are not significant and often beneficial. Conditions relating to the above environmental considerations have been included in the Environmental Proof of Evidence.
4.2 **Leeds City Council Planning Report March 2010**

4.2.1 It is perhaps worth summarising the considerations included in the report to the Plans Panel City Centre on 4th March 2010 (Appendix 4) dealing with the original application (09/04625/FU) for an almost identical scheme to that currently proposed. At this time the Blue Apartments were occupied and the tenants were therefore consulted. Waterman’s Place was in the course of being occupied and therefore occupants were not consulted. However the developers, ISIS, were consulted.

4.2.2 The appraisal states that the current route via Neville Street and beyond is heavily congested. A southern access would help to reduce congestion and at the same time continue the regeneration and revitalisation of Holbeck Village, the waterfront and the south of the city generally. In particular, the provision of a new southern station entrance is an important part of bringing Holbeck Urban Village closer to the city “in physical and perception terms” and Granary Wharf was designed with this purpose in mind. Moreover the proposals will help the vitality of businesses in Granary Wharf.

4.2.3 With regards to heritage considerations, it is pointed out that the form of the proposal will allow for views of the arches to either side. By curving the canopy around essential features, the size of the building has been reduced thus keeping any adverse impact on residents to a minimum and the use of glazing adds interest to the facades. The colour of the proposed cladding is felt to provide an appropriate contrast to the varied pallete of materials in adjacent buildings. The proposal is referred to as "visible and striking" and it is concluded that the proposal would “enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area, the waterfront and the nearby setting of listed buildings”.

4.2.4 The report affirms that there is no minimum distance by which impact on residential amenity is assessed in the city centre. Given that there would be no direct loss of sunlight to the Blue Apartments (also cladding materials would reflect light) and daylighting is already compromised by the opposite apartments, it considers that the main issue is that of over-dominance.

4.2.5 It is concluded that on balance, taking into account the importance to the southern access to the continuing regeneration of the of the city centre, this outweighs concerns regarding visual dominance to the fifteen most affected flats in the Blue Apartments and Waterman’s Place.

4.2.6 This then is a very enthusiastic endorsement of the proposals, supported by Members at the meeting. A number of conditions are recommended to deal with construction and operational impacts -- on which the current proposed conditions are based.
4.3 Planning appraisal

4.3.1 The evidence shows that there are considerable benefits arising from the Scheme:

- The increased capacity in the station created by a new southern entrance, which will relieve congestion and at the same time cater for more passengers - to the economic benefit of Leeds city centre.

- A shorter and more pleasant journey to the south of the city centre which will assist existing businesses and residential areas in this vicinity.

- Encouragement to the continuing regeneration of this area, especially Holbeck Urban Village to the south west, where savings in journey time will be greatest and where major redevelopment is proposed.

- Growth in the number of passengers using the station which will represent a modal shift from cars to public transport in line with policy, with benefits to climate change.

- Encouragement to more people in the south to walk and cycle to and from the station with commensurate benefits for health.

- An innovative and exciting architectural statement which will preserve the integrity of the Dark Arches and the conservation area which they border (LCC considers they will in fact enhance the conservation area).

- A landmark in keeping with Leeds’ desire to be a city of European status and a tourist attraction.

4.3.2 There are also some dis-benefits of the Scheme as follows:

- Some disruption to residents during construction, even with measures to mitigate this.

- An impact perceived by residents in terms of an over-dominant aspect and loss of light to adjacent apartments.

Other potential problems (safety, security, litter) have been addressed by the proposed conditions and TRO, but will require rigorous enforcement.

4.3.3 The view of English Heritage that the Scheme is too large and obscures the setting of the arches has been answered in Section 3.5 (the Scheme is however supported by Leeds Civic Trust and by the Council). Notwithstanding the fact that my and these views differ from that of English Heritage it is suggested that the arches could be floodlit at night in part to address their concerns, subject to protection of residents and bats from any light pollution. It could also be cleaned.
4.3.4 It should also be pointed that other evidence (ref LSSE.PTE/P/1.1) has shown that there is no other location for a southern entrance which will satisfy station operational requirements and which is not too remote or impractical.

4.3.5 The question then is whether the benefits are of sufficient strength to outweigh the disbenefits. Certainly the greatest benefit to the long term economic vitality of the city is the capacity argument, which will allow many more people to use the station without congestion. It could be argued that the area to the south of the city is beginning to regenerate by itself without the help of a southern entrance. However the LSSE will no doubt assist with this aim (Holbeck Urban Village in particular is expected to benefit) and there are several testimonials from key interests which confirm this. There other significant sustainability benefits in terms of the encouragement to more people to use public transport, walking and cycling instead of the car. Moreover the innovative design will make a contribution to Leeds’ list of visitor attractions.

4.3.6 Turning to the disbenefits, it is considered that the distance between the flank walls of the Scheme to habitable rooms in 5 flats in the Blue Apartments is the issue in terms of over dominance and light, given that the windows in adjacent flats in these apartments are only partly affected and the distance in the case of Waterman’s Place satisfies traditional standards. However, every effort has been made to make the aspect more agreeable for these flats. The building has been curved, the flank wall detailed to add interest and the canopy material chosen to reflect light without causing glare. This is also an inner city location where traditional standards on distance do not apply. In these circumstances the impact is considered to be acceptable.

4.3.7 Taking into account the above assessment, it is considered that the application fully satisfies national, regional and local policies and therefore is in compliance with s38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act.
5 Conclusions

5.1 The LSSE Scheme is situated directly south of the Dark Arches which span the River Aire and support Leeds City Station. This is one of Network Rail’s busiest stations serving the city centre and is often congested. The Dark Arches form a barrier to movement in this vicinity such that the only access to the station is from the north and current connections to the station from the south of the City are difficult. The LSSE Scheme will provide a shorter and more pleasant journey for people coming to and from this direction.

5.2 Leeds City Council wishes to be acknowledged as a European city. The expansion of the city centre to the south has an important role to play in this aspiration by providing space for new housing and businesses. National, regional and local policy recognises that improving infrastructure is one way of helping to encourage investment. The LSSE Scheme will not only serve existing residents and businesses to the south of the City centre, but also assist in encouraging new business and residential development in this vicinity. This will be particularly valuable for the Holbeck area to the southwest where 5,000 new jobs are planned. In addition it will cater for passenger growth generally and in doing encourage further development across the city centre.

5.3 There are other benefits in contributing to targets for modal shift from cars to public transport; also to the health of local residents and workers who will be able to walk or cycle easily to and from the new station entrance.

5.4 The need to take account of the amenities of residents in the adjacent Blue Apartments and Waterman’s Place has been a major consideration in the design. The size of the Scheme has been kept to a minimum, facades have been broken up visually and overlooking avoided. The gold coloured canopy will reflect the light without causing glare and materials used for the building and outside spaces will be robust and regularly maintained. There will be some impact on the 5 lower flats closest to the arches in the Blue Apartments but this is considered to be acceptable given the inner city location where traditional standards relating to distance do not apply.

5.5 The LSSE Scheme sits within a conservation area and the Dark Arches are designated as a “local heritage asset”. The mix of heights and styles of building within the area and the plain backdrop of the arches suggests that a strong contrasting design is the best solution for this site, especially as an opportunity presents itself for the LSSE to act a focal point when viewed from the south. To assist with this image, the structure has been deliberately “detached” from the arches and restricted in width to retain the visual integrity of the arches. The result is an exciting innovative building, an attractive feature which will preserve the character of this conservation area and which will create a landmark for the city.
5.6 A number of improvements are planned for Little Neville Street, the main access point to the Scheme. It is proposed to pedestrianise the route except for necessary local vehicles, by means of a TRO, to prevent the street being used as a drop off point for the station. New surfacing and planting and security measures are also proposed which will result in an attractive and safe route for passengers.

5.7 Turning to the Water Lane site - this is to be used as a barge loading/unloading area during construction and is the subject of a separate application for conservation area consent within the TWAO. In addition to being within a conservation area, the site is adjacent to a Grade II listed building. The work will involve the demolition of an entrance archway and wall, which will then be re-erected after the development is completed. It is therefore considered that this will, if anything, enhance the conservation area and conservation area consent should therefore be granted.

5.8 The principle of the proposed development has already been established by the grant of permission by LCC in May 2010 for an almost identical scheme. Progressing this Scheme will aid the economic vitality of the city and add to its store of well known landmarks. It is therefore recommended to you for permission.