

LEEDS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GROUP

DJL/JCH/1058
10 May 2011

Mr Neil McLean
Chairman
Leeds Enterprise Partnership
Leeds Civic Hall
3rd Floor East
Leeds
LS1 1UR

Dear Sir

LEEDS' ENTERPRISE ZONE

I refer to the email, dated 28th April, from Mark Goldstone at the Chamber of Commerce, seeking proposals for Leeds' Enterprise Zone (EZ) as recently announced in the Budget.

On behalf of the Leeds Sustainable Development Group (LSDG), I would like to register the following observations:

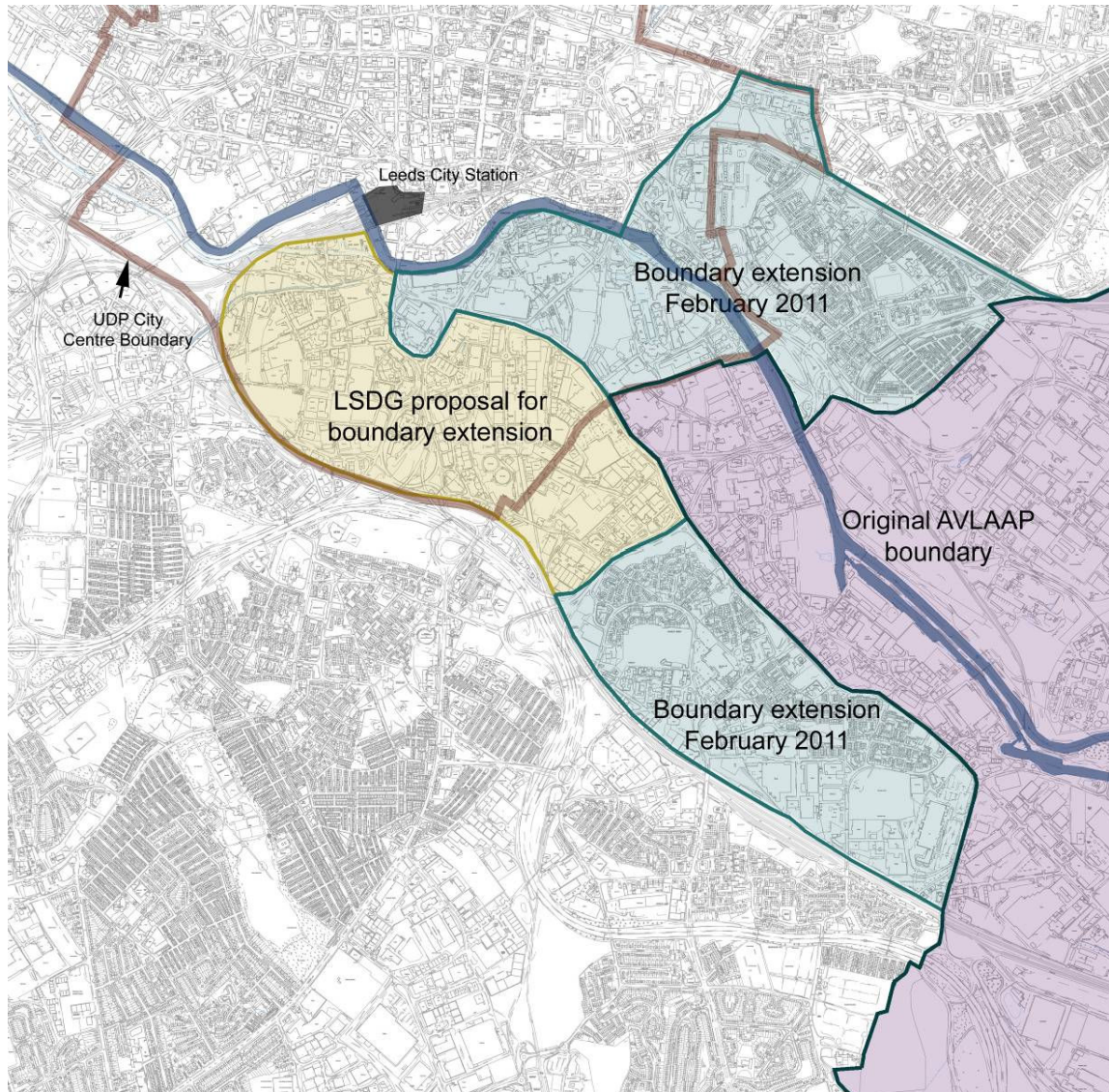
1. We understand that HM Government has proposed that the business rates within the EZ will be exempt for all occupiers for an initial period of 5 years (the 1980's EZ's were for 10 years). However, HMG will still allocate the revenue forgone to the LEP for reinvestment in the City Region economy. This could be a significant revenue stream for the LEP and therefore it is in everyone's interest that the revenue regenerating potential is maximised.
2. It is widely accepted that Leeds City Centre is a significant 'driver' for future economic growth and indeed this is the premise of the whole Leeds City Region.
3. We note that that Birmingham has allocated the City Centre Eastside as their proposed Enterprise Zone on the basis that it is predicted a total of £700 million will be raised from increased business rate collection over a 25 year period (see plan 1 below). This is a very interesting and courageous move as it could have a significant impact upon future inward investment (e.g. if Leeds and Manchester etc do not have equivalent city centre sites). Therefore, it is important that Leeds has a similar supply of high quality city centre sites for office development as well as manufacturing (in the Aire Valley).



Plan 1

LEEDS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GROUP

4. We are aware that the Aire Valley Action Plan area is being given serious consideration as a location for the proposed Enterprise Zone. We are also aware that the boundary of the area was extended to include, amongst other areas, the area defined by the South Bank Planning Statement. We recommend that the AVLAAP area be extended further to include the area illustrated on the plan below (plan 2). This reflects the 'natural economic geography' of the area to the south of the city centre bounded by the railways and motorways to the west and south.



Plan 2

All of this area is within the boundary of the Leeds City Centre as defined by the Unitary Development Plan (UDP) and is capable of being regenerated quickly and will generate cash to promote development elsewhere within the Leeds City Region

The LSDG previously provided representation to Leeds City Council on the South Bank Draft Planning Statement, issued in October 2010 (LSDG letter dated 4th October 2010, attached). Our comments were very much related to the area of the City Centre South (80 hectares) that not only extends beyond the South Bank area defined in the Draft Planning Statement but also extends beyond the area of the City Centre as defined in the UDP. We consider that there is a 'once in a lifetime opportunity' offered by the many large scale, vacant or under-utilised sites south of the River Aire, to plan for a mixed-use,

LEEDS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GROUP

environmentally-sensitive, socially and culturally sustainable urban development, both in and beyond Leeds city centre. We also recently commented on the AVLAAP Informal consultation on the emerging proposals for the draft plan February 2011 and I have enclosed the letter dated 13th April 2011 for your further information. There is absolutely no doubt that the questions we have posed in our representations would be answered positively should Leeds City Centre South be designated as an Enterprise Zone

Yours faithfully

D J LUMB
For and on behalf of
Leeds Sustainable Development Group
www.leeds-sdg.com

cc. Mark Goldstone Head of corporate relations
Leeds York and north Yorkshire Chamber of Commerce