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City ready to say yes to giant plan

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PLANS for a £300m project to breathe new life into Rotherham are expected to be given the seal of approval by Sheffield Council, after earlier objections.

The council is expected to back revised plans by Rotherham Council to build the biggest indoor leisure and tourism development in Europe at the former Pithouse West coal mine site, creating over 2,500 jobs.

Councillors are expected to rubber stamp the deal on Monday.

Initially, Sheffield Council planners had refused to support the the Yorkshire Entertainment Sensation (YES) project, fearing that the plans, which included the largest theatre outside London's West End, a four-star hotel, an extreme sports centre and a golf range, would detract from Sheffield city centre.

But Sheffield council chiefs have now agreed to the project

after project leaders Oak Holdings agreed to remove plans for a cinema, theatre and bowling alley. Plans for bars, shops and restaurants have also been significantly reduced.

Oak Holdings have also signed a deal to bring "a state of the art innovative indoor entertainment centre" to the area.

But Sheffield Council leaders have been given assurances that this will not impact on any potential development in their city.

A spokesman for Sheffield Council said: "This is to be welcomed as is the developers' stated intention to reorientate the YES scheme towards "business tourism" and sport/recreation facilities that will not seriously impact on the town centre leisure facilities."

After the formal planning process conducted by Rotherham Council the scheme will be referred to the Government because of its scale and location.