

# Planning Committee

Tuesday, 14th February, 2023

PRE DETERMINATION HEARING  
HELD IN A HYBRID FORMAT AT 4.30 P.M.

Members present: Councillor Whyte (Chairperson);  
Alderman Rodgers;  
Councillors Bower, Carson, Matt Collins,  
Douglas, Garrett, Groogan, Hanvey,  
Hutchinson, Maskey, Murphy and Spratt.

In attendance: Ms. K. Bentley, Director of Planning and Building Control;  
Ms. N. Largey, City Solicitor;  
Mr. E. Baker, Planning Manager (Development  
Management);  
Mr. P. Fitzsimons, Principal Planning Officer;  
Ms. C. Reville, Principal Planning Officer;  
Mr. M. McErlean, Senior Planning Officer;  
Mr. K. Sutherland, Planning Manager (Plans and Policy);  
Mr. D. O’Kane, Principal Planning Officer; and  
Ms. C. Donnelly, Democratic Services Officer.

## Apologies

Apologies for inability to attend were reported from Councillor Hussey.

## Declarations of Interest

The Chairperson (Councillor Whyte) declared an interest in relation to item 2 – LA04/2021/1672/O, on the basis that he had previously worked with Radius Housing and left the meeting while the item was being considered.

**Pre-Determination Hearing in respect of LA04/2021/1672/O  
Outline planning permission (with all matters reserved) for mixed use  
development on Sites A, B, C, D. Comprising up to 7,710 sqm GEA  
mixed use to include tourist hostel, residential, office, retail,  
commercial including community enterprise, community  
infrastructure and social enterprise floor space (A1 or A2 or  
B1 or B2 or C1 or C2 or D1) units on Site A, up to 6,980 sqm  
GEA of Hotel (C2) floorspace on Site B, the erection of a  
multi-storey car park comprising of up to 231 spaces  
(4,130 sqm GEA) and up to 7,130 sqm GEA of employment  
or community (A1 or A2 or B1 or B2) floorspace on Site C  
and up to 1,110 sqm GEA mixed use to include residential,  
office, retail, commercial including community enterprise,  
community infrastructure and social enterprise (A1 or A2**

**or B1 or B2 or D1) floorspace on Site D. Outline planning permission (with no matters reserved) for the erection of 94 residential dwellings (social housing). Comprising of 44 residential units on Site**

(The Chairperson, having declared an interest in the item, left the meeting while the item was under consideration.)

(Deputy Chairperson, Councillor Maskey in the Chair.)

The Senior Planning Officer outlined the background of the application and provided the Committee with an overview of the proposal that included aerial view images, site location photographs, plans and maps. He highlighted that a revised Travel Plan had been received with a subsequent consultation response from DfI Roads.

The Deputy Chairperson welcomed Mr. B. McKervey and Mr. D. Madden from DfI Historic Environment Division, Mr. T. Sloan from AECOM, Ms. D. Quinn from Radius Housing, Mr. G. Moore from Consarc, Mr. A. Crozier from TODD Architects and Mr. D. Donnelly from Inislyn to the meeting.

In response to a question from a Member with regard to the requirement for play space if there were to be any additional residential component to the proposal, the Senior Planning Officer indicated that the quantum was fixed and that any additional housing component would not be considered under reserved matters and would require a new application with a full assessment.

In response to a question from a Member regarding the provision for a multi-story car park and if the requirement could be amended, and whether the car park was reflective of the need in the city and not site specific, the Senior Planning Manager indicated that the spaces were to cater for the extension to the hotel, displacement of existing surface level parking was considered. The Planning Manager added that, having regard to the existing use and loss of existing parking spaces combined with the need for the proposed development, in officers' view, the need for the car park was justified.

Mr. B. McKervey stated that the scale of the development was inappropriate and the HED position was that it was an industrial complex with a significant border to the main Ormeau Road and the main consideration was the proposal's mass and height in relation to the listed assets within the Gasworks site and that it diluted the enclosure of an industrial site and would negatively impact on the character of the Gasworks site.

Mr. T. Sloan welcomed the Department's decision to return the application to the Council for final determination. In relation to Mr. McKervey's comments, he stated that the building on site A complied with the BMAP designation and the outline building plots had been given substantial consideration in terms of demand, use, form and density across the masterplan. He added that the final design was reflective of a comprehensive pre-application process and that he was confident that the proposal represented the best possible response to the very constrained urban site.

He concluded by stating that the proposal would deliver many benefits to Belfast and the proposed residential units would help deliver much needed housing in the area, create jobs and opportunities to develop new businesses. He requested that the Planning Committee endorse the recommendation.

Mr. G. Moore reported that, historically, the Gasworks site would have contained several large buildings and that Site A was outside the historic development limit of the Gasworks site.

Mr. D. Donnelly stated that most cars in future would be electric and would require many charging points within car parks. He added that residents in the area were opposed to openings between the residential and commercial section of the Gasworks.

The Deputy Chairperson thanked the speakers for their contributions.

Chairperson