

Town Planning Committee

Wednesday, 12th September, 2012

SPECIAL MEETING OF TOWN PLANNING COMMITTEE

Members present: Councillor Patterson (Chairman);
Alderman Rodgers; and
Councillors Curran, Hanna and Spence.

Also attended: Councillor Jones.

In attendance: Mr. B. Flynn, Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

Apologies were reported from Alderman Smyth and Councillors M. E. Campbell, Kingston, Lavery, McNamee and Mullan.

Declarations of Interest

No declarations were reported.

Northern Ireland Environment Agency - Second Survey of Buildings

The Committee was advised that Mr. A. Turkington and Ms. N. O'Rourke, representing the Northern Ireland Environment Agency, were in attendance to provide a presentation in respect of the Agency's Second Survey of historic buildings within the Belfast area and they were admitted to the meeting and welcomed by the Chairman.

Mr. Turkington explained that the Northern Ireland Environment Agency was based within the Department of the Environment. He outlined the rationale which had been adopted in the undertaking of a Second Survey of buildings of historic interest in the City. He explained that the data recorded during the first survey, which had been carried out between the early-1970s and mid-1990s, had been deemed insufficient since the information had not been considered detailed enough, nor had it been amended to reflect evolving legislation regarding the listing of buildings. He reported that the Second Survey was being undertaken by a team of contracted surveyors who assessed buildings for listing using criteria which assessed both external and internal conditions, together with consideration of the style, proportion, ornamentation and quality of the building. In addition, historical context and social importance was taken into consideration when applying the criteria.

Mr. Turkington reported that, whilst there existed no formal right of appeal regarding the Agency's determination on the status of a building, an owner could make representations to the Agency if they considered that aspects of its architecture or history had not been considered. This, he added, should be supported by factual evidence and the Agency would, if merited, reassess the building's merit in light of the additional information.

He concluded by indicating that the Agency would be pleased to consider suggestions from Members for additional buildings to be assessed within this timescale of the Second Survey.

After discussion, during which the representatives of the Northern Ireland Environment Agency clarified a number of matters for the Members, the Committee noted the information which had been provided.

Chairman