

Archaeology & Built Heritage

Section Reference: HB26 50 280

Considerations

Consideration of application for Erection of Purpose Built Managed Student Accommodation (PBMSA) development comprising 862 units with additional use of accommodation by further or higher education institutions outside term time, communal facilities, internal amenity courtyard, cycle stores, active ground floor uses including café and retail, and associated bin stores and plant and public realm improvements to surrounding footpaths', located at Lands bounded by Library Street (to south); Stephen Street (to west); Little Donegall Street (to north); and Union Street (to east) Belfast BT1 2JE, (LA04/2022/1284/F), affecting a number of listed buildings of special architectural or historic interest as set out in Section 80 and protected under the Planning Act (NI) 2011.

The application site is in close proximity to / impacts upon a number of listed buildings which are of special architectural or historic interest and is protected by Section 80 of the Planning Act (NI) 2011.

The list below are deemed to be impacted by this application:

- HB26 50 280 - Frames Snooker Hall, 2-14 Little Donegall Street, Belfast Grade B1
- HB26 50 065 - Central Library, 126 Royal Avenue, Belfast Grade A
- HB26 50 189 - Irish News Office, 113 Donegall Street, Belfast Grade B
- HB26 50 077A - St. Patricks Church, Donegal Street, Belfast Grade B+
- HB26 50 077B - St. Patricks Parochial House, Donegall Street Grade B2

Historic Environment Division (HED), Historic Buildings, has considered the impacts of the proposal on the listed buildings and on the basis of the information provided, advises that:

- We are content with the proposal, as presented, subject to conditions.

These comments are made in relation to the requirements of the Strategic Planning Policy Statement for Northern Ireland (SPPS) para(s) 6.12 and 6.13 and of Planning Policy Statement 6: Planning, Archaeology and the Built Heritage (PPS6) Policies BH8 and BH11.

Explanatory note

Engagement

HED Historic Buildings acknowledges ongoing engagement with the agent and Belfast City Council regarding this application site as part of the Pre-Application Discussion application (LA04/2022/0633/PAD).

Application site:

The application site is located to the north-west of Belfast City Centre, directly behind 'Frames Snooker Hall' (HB26 50 280) and it forms an intermediary context between Millfield and Carrick Hill and Belfast City Centre. Presently used as Library Street public car-park,

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this application proposes to reinstate the historic urban grain and will form the setting for a number of listed and historic buildings within north-west Belfast City centre.

Frames Snooker Hall is a Grade B1 listed building with a ‘...the dramatic eastern curved frontage with its four storey conical tower commanding a view of the Royal Avenue-Library Street junction.’ (HED 2nd survey, 14th February 2008).

Form scale and mass

The overall massing approach in the option shown in ‘Planning Submission Response’ dated 17th November 2022 is acceptable with the increased height and volume of the proposal focussed on the north-west of the site and stepping down to respect the setting of the more intimate historic Victorian context of Union Street and beyond.

HED HB notes the overall height of the proposal in context with the surrounding existing with the tallest element stretching to a height of 41.140m.

As noted above, the four-storey conical tower remains the most significant architectural feature of Frames Snooker Hall and HED HB considers the proposals provide a balanced backdrop to the listed building without competing visually with this important architectural feature.

HED HB considers the concept of a set-back on the Union Street and Library Street corner to the rear of Frames Snooker Hall an appropriate response which ensures the proposal responds to the parapet height of the rear block of the listed building. This must not be increased in any way by plant or machinery, in order to respect the setting of the listed building.

Façade articulation

HED HB considers the façade treatment and materiality of the proposals generally comply with BH11 of PPS6 in that ‘(b) the works proposed make use of traditional or sympathetic building materials and techniques which respect those found on the building’.

The red-brick responds to the materials found on Frames Snooker Hall and Belfast Central Library. The vertical proportions of the openings are appropriate. Though supportive of current/modern detailing in general, HED requests that traditional brick patterns/bonds are considered as part of this application, with deep set back/reveals in the Victorian tradition for this material, to enrich the large expanses of brick being used here.

HED notes that the application site is located within on the periphery of the Belfast City Centre Conservation Area and defers to the conservation officer to comment on the impact of the proposal on the character and appearance of same.

Suggested Conditions

1) The building height including all access railings, plant and machinery shall be no higher than that shown on the approved drawings.

Reason: To respect the character and setting of the listed building, ensuring the high quality detailed design is compliant with Policy BH11 (Development affecting the Setting of a Listed

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Building) of the Department's Planning Policy Statement 6: Planning, Archaeology and the Built Heritage in that:

(a) The detailed design respects the listed building in terms of scale, height, massing and alignment;

(b) The works proposed make use of traditional or sympathetic building materials and techniques which respect those found on the building; and

(c) The nature of the use proposed respects the character of the setting of the building.

2) Prior to commencement of development, Sample brickwork panels should be provided and approved in writing by the Council in conjunction with HED for any brickwork which can be viewed in juxtaposition with the listed building.

Reason: To respect the character and setting of the listed building and to respect the traditional building materials and techniques found on these buildings, ensuring the high quality detailed design is compliant with Policy BH11 (Development affecting the Setting of a Listed Building) of the Department's Planning Policy Statement 6: Planning, Archaeology and the Built Heritage in that:

(a) The detailed design respects the listed building in terms of scale, height, massing and alignment;

(b) The works proposed make use of traditional or sympathetic building materials and techniques which respect those found on the building; and

(c) The nature of the use proposed respects the character of the setting of the building.

3) Unless shown on the approved plans, no structures, awnings, fixtures or fittings shall be placed on the roof terrace of a height of 1.5m or above as measured from floor level of the terrace.

Reason: To preserve or enhance the character of the setting of the listed building.

Informatives

Additional information/advice (e.g. on legislation, guidance, contacts, etc.) for applicant's awareness:

Legislation & policy

1. The Planning Act (NI) 2011
2. Strategic Planning Policy Statement for Northern Ireland (SPPS NI) – Planning for Sustainable Development.
3. Planning Policy Statement 6 – Planning, Archaeology and the Built Heritage.

Guidance

4. HED Technical Notes - <https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/articles/repair-and-maintenance-guidance>
5. HED Consultation Guide - Guidance on making changes to Listed Buildings: <https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/publications/guidance-making-changes-listed-buildings-making-better-application-listed-building-consent>
6. HED Consultation Guide – Consulting HED on development management applications <https://www.communities->

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- [ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/communities/consulting-hed-development-management-applications-consultation-guide.pdf](https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/communities/consulting-hed-development-management-applications-consultation-guide.pdf)
7. HED Consultation Guide - Setting and the Historic Environment
<https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/publications/guidance-setting-and-historic-environment>
 8. British Standard - BS 7913:2013 Guide to the conservation of historic buildings
 9. Historic Environment Map Viewer -
<https://dfcgis.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=6887ca0873b446e39d2f82c80c8a9337>
 10. Link to various HED advice and guidance in the planning process:
<https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/articles/historic-environment-advice-and-guidance-planning-process>
 11. HED Framework statement to development management:
<https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/communities/our-planning-services-and-standards-framework.pdf>
 12. DfI Development Management Practice Note 5 – Historic Environment
<https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/publications/development-management-practice-notes>