



## Belfast City Council

Report to:	Development Committee
Subject:	Gasworks Northern Fringe
Date:	16 January 2008
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### Relevant Background Information

A Special Development Committee on 15 May 2007 approved the Gasworks Northern Fringe Masterplan report.

The Masterplan acknowledges the desire of the owners of the Radisson Hotel to extend the hotel and provide additional facilities. The lands acquired for the Radisson Hotel were roughly triangular leaving some additional residual lands to the north indisposed. An agreement dated 21 April 2000 has been made between Inislyn, the developers of the Radisson SAS Hotel and the City Council to rationalise these land shapes to help the process of redevelopment should the road scheme previously proposed through the Northern Fringe Site be abandoned.

Inislyn have now prepared for Committee proposals providing for hotel accommodation, car parking and a speculative office development. These proposals relate to development on sites C and D of the Northern Fringe Masterplan see attached **Appendix 1**. The NIE site of 1.35 acres at Stewart Street is currently being marketed by Colliers CRE with offers of £8 million. This site has been identified in the NFMP as an important strategic location to deliver improved environmental quality to the neighbouring community. The NFMP has identified the most beneficial uses of the site as either residential (public sector) or small incubator business units. Less intensive development of this site would sit better alongside the character of the existing adjacent residential areas and offer greater living and employment opportunities within the community.

### Key Issues

The plans prepared for Inislyn by Consarc provide for the additional hotel accommodation:-

- Ground Floor – Spa, leisure pool, kitchens and plant
- First Floor – 600 seater function room, breakout area, roof top garden
- Second Floor – 5 small meeting rooms and breakout areas
- Third Floor – 30 double bedrooms
- Fourth Floor – 30 double bedrooms

Inislyn have agreed heads of terms for an extended management agreement with Radisson SAS to operate the hotel complex.

The cost of provision of this hotel extension is estimated at approximately £10 million and will result in a doubling of staff from 80 to 160 persons.

Inislyn have indicated that car parking will be required to support the 60 rooms proposed and to service the 600 seater function room. Inislyn's proposal is for a four and a half deck car park with a vehicle capacity for 360 cars. There would also be 64 surface car park spaces giving a total capacity of 424 within the scheme.

The scale of car parking has been based on:-

Visitor car parking	-	120
BCC staff	-	120
Existing office requirements	-	40
Proposed speculative office development, hotel extension and existing hotel requirements	-	<u>184</u>
	Total	- 424 spaces

Inislyn have indicated that as with the original hotel development a speculative office development is required for funding purposes. They have included within their plans a stand alone office block comprising 35,000 sq ft net over 5 storeys with a cost of approximately £4 million. Consarc have held preliminary discussions with the Planning Service who have given a favourable reaction to the scheme. Car parking can be negotiated at this stage to provide a visitor provision not catered for in the current Masterplan. Construction of a multi-storey car park could provide flexibility when developing other sites on the Northern Fringe. The financial returns from sites C and D should be maximised as Inislyn are best placed to realise the fullest potential of the sites through greater density of development on site C by building immediately adjacent to the existing hotel.

### **Resource Implications**

#### Financial Implications

Inislyn are best placed to realise the fullest potential of sites C and D through greater density of development by building immediately adjacent to the existing hotel. The purchase of site F from NIE would result in a cost of approximately £8 million to BCC however potential development of this site alongside the rest of the NFMP may be achieved at no cost to BCC by agreeing appropriate joint venture or land swap arrangements.

#### Asset Implications

The potential redevelopment of 7.02 acres of land in the city centre and completion of the Gasworks Complex commenced over 10 years ago.

### **Recommendations**

Committee agree to Officers entering into negotiations with Inislyn in a one to one deal in order to maximise the potential of sites C and D. The proposals of Inislyn offer the opportunity to secure more generous car parking for the hotel scheme. Construction of

a multi storey car park in the immediate future could provide flexibility when developing the remaining sites on the Northern Fringe. The immediate development proposals for Inislyn would yield an early return from the Northern Fringe.

#### **Key to Abbreviations**

NFMP - Northern Fringe Masterplan  
BCC - Belfast City Council

#### **Documents Attached**

**Appendix 1** - Gasworks Northern Fringe Site Plan

# Appendix 1