

Planning Committee

Tuesday, 13th August, 2024

MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE

Members present: Councillor Carson (Chairperson);
Aldermen McCullough and Rodgers;
Councillors Abernethy, Anglin, Bell, T. Brooks,
Doran, S. Douglas, Ferguson, Garrett,
Groogan, Hanvey, Magee, McCabe, McCann
Murphy and Whyte.

In attendance: Ms. K. Bentley, Director of Planning and Building Control;
Mr. K. McDonnell, Solicitor (Regulatory and Planning)
Mr. E. Baker, Planning Manager (Development Management);
Mr. D. O’Kane, Acting Planning Manager (Plans and Policy);
Ms. C. Reville, Principal Planning Officer;
Ms. L. Walshe, Principal Planning Officer; and
Ms. C. Donnelly, Committee Services Officer.

Apologies

An apology for inability to attend was reported on behalf of Alderman Lawlor.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 18th June, 2024 were taken as read and signed as correct. It was reported that those minutes had been adopted by the Council, at its meeting on 1st July, 2024, subject to the omission of those matters in respect of which the Council had delegated its powers to the Committee.

Declarations of Interest

Councillor Murphy declared an interest in relation to item 9a - LA04/2024/0344/F and LA04/2024/0321/LBC - Construction of a new South Wing of the RBAI Campus to include multi-purpose dining hall, 15 general classrooms, a drama suite, a 25m swimming pool, a Board Room suite, living accommodation for the School Steward with PV panels on roof and new, small extension to the Soane Building, to provide improved accessibility and upgraded WC facilities, with associated refurbishment and re-modelling of first and second floor classrooms to the southern end of the Soane Building, the development of landscaped zones including the under-croft area at the Common Hall and new boundary treatment at Durham Street and demolition of the existing dining hall, swimming pool, school steward's house and W-Block. - The Royal Belfast Academical Institution College Square East, in that he had previously met with the Board of Governors regarding the application and left the meeting whilst the item was under consideration.

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Committee Site Visits

The Committee noted the site visits which had taken place on 25th June, 2024.

Notification of Provision/Removal of Accessible Parking Bay

The Committee noted the notifications regarding accessible parking bays at the following locations:

- Provision at 93 Clarawood Park;
- Provision at Ballyhackamore;
- Provision at 25 Ballynafoy Close;
- Provision at 33 Ballysillan Drive;
- Provision at 56 Locksley Gardens; and
- Removal at 244 Ravenhill Avenue.

Notifications of Abandonment and Extinguishment

**Notifications from Statutory Bodies – Footway
between Peters Hill and Clifton Street /
17 Aughrim Park**

The Committee noted the correspondence in relation to the confirmation of an Abandonment Order for sections of footway between Peters Hill and Clifton Street and the extinguishment of a Public Right of Way at the rear of 17 Aughrim Park.

Planning Appeals Notified

The Committee noted the appeals decisions.

Planning Decisions Issued

The Committee noted the planning decisions issued in April, 2024.

Miscellaneous Reports

**Advance Notice of Listed Buildings - 143 Malone
Road and Inchmarlo Prep School, Cranmore
Park**

The Committee agreed to support the proposed listing in respect of:

- Inchmarlo Prep School, Cranmore Park; and
- 143 Malone Road, Belfast, BT9 6SX

Local applications subject to NI Water objections

The Committee agreed to delegate to the Director of Planning and Building Control those Local Planning Applications to which NI Water had objected.

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Planning Applications previously considered

LA04/2023/3030/F - Erection of 201-bed Purpose Built Managed Student Accommodation scheme and retail unit (11-storey) (amended description and plans). - 41-49 Dublin Road and 3-5 Ventry Street

The Principal Planning Officer provided the Committee with an overview of the application and explained that the Committee had approved the proposal in December, 2023 and had delegated authority to resolve a final response from DfI Roads and to negotiate a Section 76 Planning Agreement.

She reported that DfI Roads had subsequently provided a response and offered no objections and that the Section 76 Planning Agreement had been significantly delayed due to land ownership issues.

She informed the Committee that the Section 79 Planning Agreement had been agreed in July and that a late objection had been received and therefore required the application to be presented to the Committee for consideration. She stated the objection had since been withdrawn but that the Committee would also need to consider a new application for the redevelopment of the adjacent Fanum House with a Purpose-Built Managed Student Accommodation (PBMSA) scheme. She reported that the proposed PBMSA schemes at Dublin Road, Ventry Street and Fanum House were broadly compatible.

She explained that the recommendation remained that planning permission be granted.

The Committee granted planning permission, subject to conditions and a Section 76 planning agreement, and delegated authority to the Director of Planning and Building Control to finalise the wording of the conditions and Section 76 planning agreement, and to deal with any other issues that might arise, provided that they were not substantive.

New Planning Applications

LA04/2024/0344/F and LA04/2024/0321/LBC - Construction of a new South Wing of the RBAI Campus to include multi-purpose dining hall, 15 general classrooms, a drama suite, a 25m swimming pool, a Board Room suite, living accommodation for the School Steward with PV panels on roof and new, small extension to the Soane Building, to provide improved accessibility and upgraded WC facilities, with associated refurbishment and re-modelling of first and second floor classrooms to the southern end of the Soane Building, the development of landscaped zones including the under-croft area at the Common Hall and new boundary treatment at Durham Street and

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demolition of the existing dining hall, swimming pool, school steward's house and W-Block. - The Royal Belfast Academical Institution College Square East

The Planning Manager outlined the application for the Committee and highlighted the following key issues for consideration:

- Principle of development;
- Impact on the special architectural and historic qualities of the Listed Building and setting of adjacent Listed Buildings;
- Impact on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area;
- Design and placemaking;
- Climate change;
- Access and transport;
- Health impacts;
- Environmental protection;
- Flood risk and drainage;
- Waste-water infrastructure;
- Waste management;
- Natural heritage;
- Employability and skills;
- Section 76 planning agreement; and
- Pre-application community consultation.

He pointed out that the Listed curtilage buildings which had been proposed for demolition were later additions that were not of architectural or historic significance and had only benefited from Listed Building status through being curtilage buildings. He added that they were unsuitable for modern educational needs, would be replaced by high quality buildings and that DfC Historic Environment Division (HED) had offered no objection to the demolition and concluded that the demolition of the Listed Building was wholly exceptional.

He explained that the demolition of W Block, a later addition to the Soane Building, was wholly exceptional as it was not the most significant or authentic part of the Listed Soane Building, it was unsuitable for educational needs and that most of the interior had been lost through the years. He stated that the proposal would facilitate the redevelopment with a much better building.

The Planning Manager reported that Environmental Health required additional information in relation to land contamination, odour and noise He added that DfI Roads had also sought further information, however, the Planning Manager advised that there would be no increase in pupils, staff or vehicular trips.

He stated that, having regard to the Development Plan and material considerations, it was recommended that planning permission, Listed Building Consent and Conservation Area Consent would be granted, subject to conditions.

The Chairperson welcomed Mr. P. Flemming, Flemming Mountstephen Planning, to the meeting who was attending on behalf of the applicant.

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Mr. Flemming outlined the campus vision and explained that the school attracted over 1,000 pupils into the city centre daily and that the proposal would address all of the school's short and medium-term needs which was a critical element in the realisation of the long-term vision for the school campus.

He stated that the proposed development had three inter-related elements, namely, demolition, new development and landscape works. He explained that, in recent years, the school had invested heavily in its built heritage, Christ Church had been restored in partnership with the Belfast Buildings Preservation Trust for use as the school library and IT Centre and the Soane Building was the subject of a careful and award-winning restoration scheme. He added that other facilities in the school had been upgraded to ensure that 'Inst' as a city centre school remained attractive and provided the best quality education in all its forms.

Mr. Flemming stated that the proposal would enhance the Listed Soane Building, the school campus and the City Centre Conservation Area and fully aligned with the vision, aims, objectives and strategic policies of the Belfast Local Development Plan Strategy.

The Committee granted planning permission, Listed Building Consent and Conservation Area Consent, subject to conditions and delegated authority to the Director of Planning and Building Control to finalise the wording of the conditions, to resolve whether Conservation Area Consent was required, in view of the application for Listed Building Consent. and to deal with any other issues that arise, to include the final consultation responses from DfI Roads and Environmental Health, provided that they were not substantive.

LA04/2021/1593/F - Retrospective application for construction of new seated viewing stand with a capacity of 228 people in same location as previous seated viewing stand now demolished which had 255 capacity - Recreational grounds at Blanchflower Playing Fields, Holywood Road

The Planning Manager outlined the application to the Committee and highlighted the following key issues for consideration:

- The principle of development;
- Impact on the character and appearance of the area;
- Impact on amenity;
- Drainage;
- Access and Parking; and
- Impact on natural heritage.

He reported that there were no objections from statutory consultees or Environmental Health and that no third party representations had been received.

He stated that it was recommended that the application would be approved, subject to conditions.

The Committee granted planning permission, subject to conditions and delegated authority to the Director of Planning and Building Control to finalise the wording of the

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conditions and to deal with any other matters that may arise, provided that they were not substantive.

LA04/2024/0358/F - Proposed change of use from Office (Use class B1) to Health Care Hub (incorporating use classes D1, A1 and A2), external alterations to the façade of the property and other ancillary site works (Amended Description). Park House, 87-91 Great Victoria Street

The Principal Planning Officer provided the Committee with an overview of the application and referred to the following key issues:

- Principle of medical use at this location;
- Provision of community infrastructure;
- Access and transport; and
- Environmental considerations.

She explained that the proposed use was considered acceptable within the sustainable city centre locations and in compliance with retail and community infrastructure policies contained within the LDP Plan Strategy.

She stated that, having regard to the Development Plan and material considerations, it was recommended that planning permission be granted, subject to conditions.

The Committee granted planning permission, subject to conditions and delegated authority to the Director of Planning and Building Control to finalise the wording of the conditions and to deal with any other matters that might arise, provided that they were not substantive.

LA04/2024/0656/F - Proposed roof space conversion creating dormer to rear of dwelling with 2no rooflights. - 41 Owenvarragh Park

The Committee considered the report and granted planning permission, subject to conditions and delegated authority to the Director of Planning and Building Control to finalise the wording of the conditions and to deal with any other matters that might arise, provided that they were not substantive.

Restricted Items

The information contained in the reports associated with the following items is restricted in accordance with Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.

Resolved – That the Committee agrees to exclude the Members of the Press and public from the Committee meeting during discussion on the following items as, due to their nature, there would be a disclosure of exempt information as described in Section 42(4) and Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.

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**Planning Application LA04/2023/3821/F –
Proposed change of use from offices to
aparthotel (136 rooms) with the creation
of additional floors to the upper section
of building along with elevational alterations
and associated development. Dorchester
House, 52-58 Great Victoria Street**

The Planning Manager reported an error in the processing of the planning application which had been approved by the Committee at its meeting in June.

The Committee noted the content of the report and agreed not to take any further action in relation to the matter.

Quarter 4 Finance Report

The Director of Planning and Building Control presented the report on the Quarter 4 financial position for the Planning Committee.

The Committee noted the report and the associated reporting pack.

Chairperson