

Planning Committee

Development Management Report

Summary	
Date of Committee: 18th March 2025	
Application Ref: LA04/2025/0140/LBC	
Proposal: Installation of new stained-glass window within City Hall	Location: Belfast City Hall 2 Donegall Square North Belfast BT1 5GS
Referral Route: Referral to the Planning Committee under Section 3.8.5 (c) of the Scheme of Delegation (council as applicant and landowner)	
Recommendation: Grant Listed Building Consent	
Applicant Name and Address: Esther Waugh Belfast City Council 9-21 Adelaide Street Belfast BT2 8DJ	Agent Name and Address: <i>Applicant is Agent</i>
Date Valid: 29 th January 2025	
Target Date: 14 th May 2025	
Contact Officer: Ciara Reville, Principal Planning Officer (Development Management)	
<p>Executive Summary:</p> <p>The application seeks Listed Building Consent to remove the existing stain-glass window and install a new stain-glass window to the ground floor of Belfast City Hall.</p> <p>The existing stain-glass window is to be removed, set into wooden crates and placed in storage. The new stain-glass window design will depict the Pride parade as well as local figures and landmarks relating to Belfast's LGBTQ+ history. The new stain-glass window is to be cut, painted, constructed, weather proofed and installed using traditional techniques, in keeping with the other stained glass within the area. The new window will make use of the original steel sub frame, making some adjustments in situ (i.e. removing the internal mullions and transoms). This will allow the new window to be viewed unhindered by the horizontal and vertical steel bands.</p> <p>Belfast City Hall is a Grade A listed building of special architectural or historic interest.</p> <p><u>Area Plan</u></p> <p>The site is located within the City Centre in BUAP, within the City Centre Area of Townscape Character in both versions of dBMAP. The surrounding area is commercial in nature with a mix of city centre uses, the building is surrounded by several listed buildings.</p> <p>The proposal is considered to comply with the SPPS, Policies BH1 and BH2 of the Belfast Local Development Plan Strategy 2035 and Section 91(2) of the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011.</p> <p>There will be minimal impact on the existing structure.</p> <p>DfC HED were consulted and are content in principle with the installation of a new stained-glass window in the location outlined in this application, requesting that the original window is carefully removed, retained completely intact and carefully stored, for any potential future use on the estate.</p>	

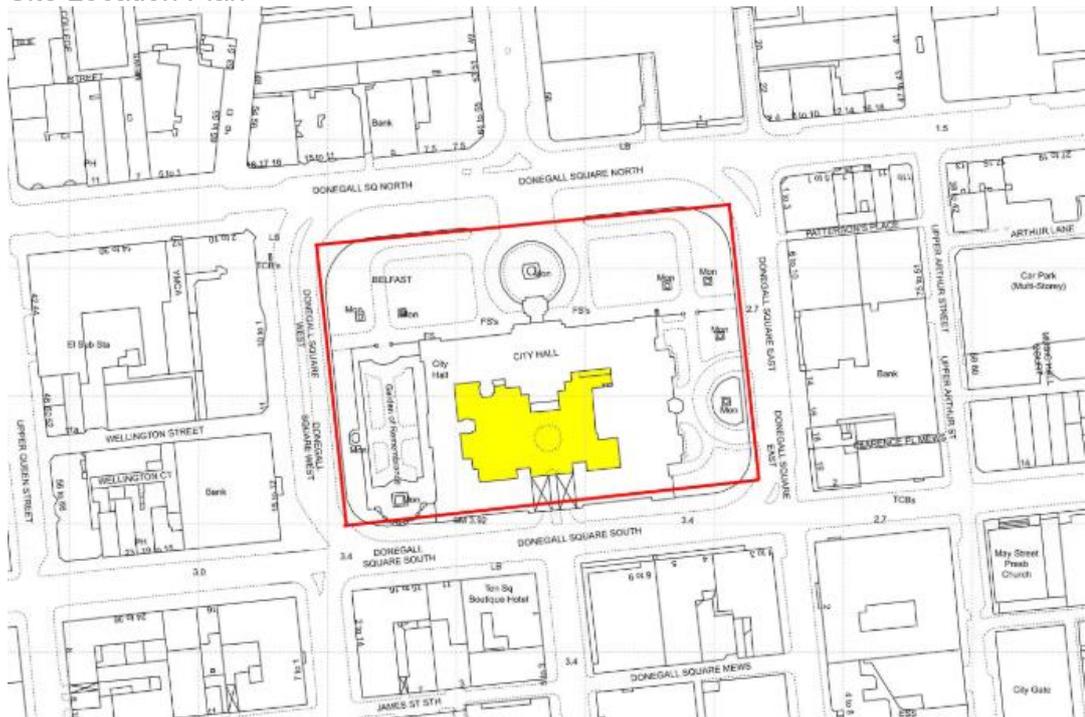
Recommendation:

Having regard to the development plan and other material considerations, the proposal is considered acceptable. It is recommended that Listed Building Consent is granted. Delegated authority is sought for the Director of Planning and Building Control to finalise the conditions and deal with any other matters which may arise so long as they are not substantive.

Case Officer Report

1.0 Drawings

1.1 Site Location Plan



1.2 Existing Window



fig 1.1 & 1.2 - Internal views of existing stained glass windows to be removed, set into wooden crates and placed in storage

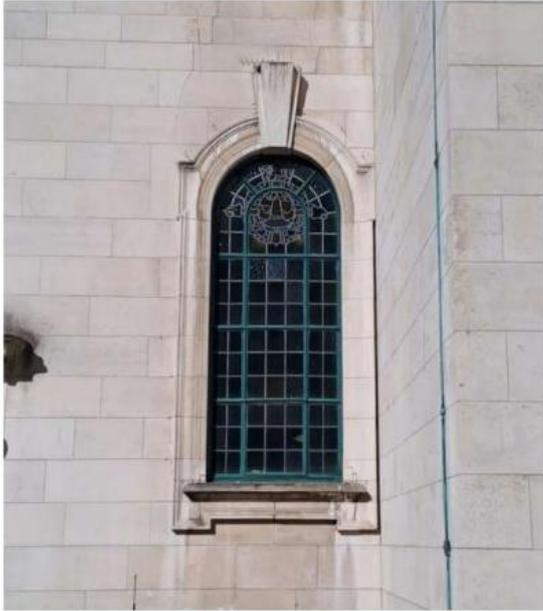
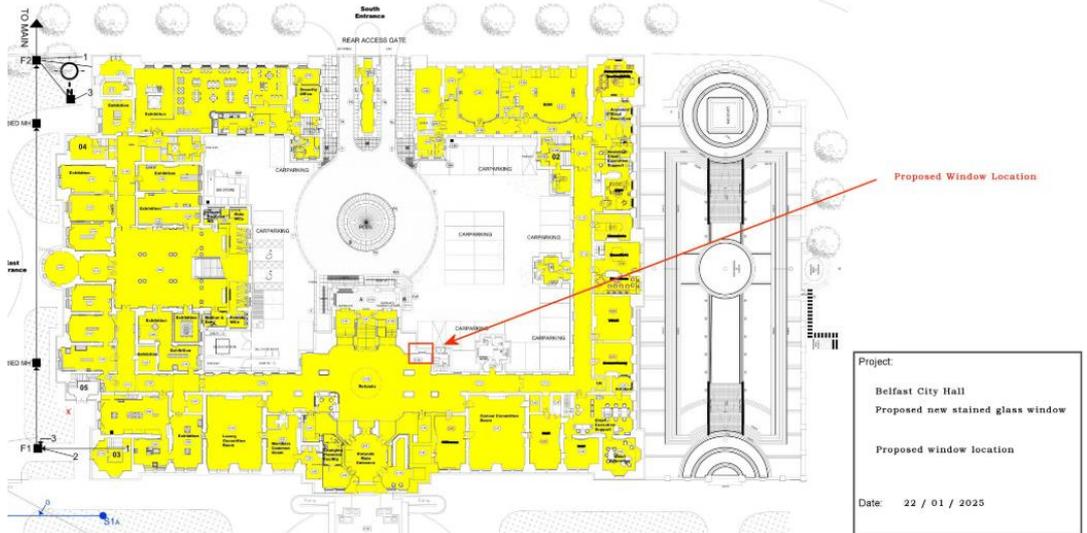


fig 2.1 & 2.2 - External views of existing stained glass windows to be removed, set into wooden crates and placed in storage.



fig 3.1 - Example of typical brass plaque placed next to the newly installed stained glass window

1.3 Proposed New Window Location



2.0 Characteristics of Site and Area

2.1 The site is located within on the ground floor of Belfast City Hall, a Grade A listed building which is of special architectural or historic interest located in Donegall Square.

2.2	The surrounding area is predominantly commercial to the north of the site and business use to the south of City Hall.
2.3	The site is located within the City Centre in BUAP and within the City Centre Conservation Area in both versions of dBMAP.
3.0	Description of Proposal
3.1	This application seeks Listed Building Consent to remove the existing stain-glass window and install a new stain-glass window to the ground floor of Belfast City Hall. The window will be located within the internal courtyard.
4.0	Planning Policy and Other Material Considerations
4.1	Development Plan – Plan Strategy Belfast Local Development Plan: Plan Strategy 2035
4.2	Operational Policies Policy BH1 – Listed buildings Policy BH2 – Conservation areas Policy BH3 – Areas of townscape character
4.3	Development Plan – zoning, designations and proposals maps Belfast Urban Area Plan (2001) BUAP Draft Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan 2015 (v2004) Draft Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan 2015 (v2014)
4.4	Regional Planning Policy Regional Development Strategy 2035 (RDS) Strategic Planning Policy Statement for Northern Ireland (SPPS)
4.5	Relevant Planning History There is no planning history directly relevant to the proposal.
5.0	Consultations and Representations
5.1	Statutory Consultees Responses DfC HED are content in principle with the installation of a new stained-glass window in the proposed location. HED has requested that the original window is carefully removed, retained completely intact and carefully stored, for any potential future use.
5.2	The application was advertised on 28th February 2025. No representations have been received.
6.0	Planning Assessment
6.1	Section 6(4) of the Planning (Northern Ireland) Act 2011 states that in making any determinations under the Act, regard is to be had to the local development plan, and the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
6.2	Section 45(1) of the Act states that in determining planning applications, the Council must have regard to the local development plan, so far as material to the application, and to any other material considerations.
6.3	The Belfast Local Development Plan (LDP), when fully completed, will replace the Belfast Urban Area Plan 2001 as the statutory Development Plan for the city. The Belfast LDP will comprise two parts. Part 1 is the Plan Strategy, which contains

	strategic and operational policies and was adopted on 02 May 2023. Part 2 is the Local Policies Plan, which will provide the zonings and proposals maps for Belfast and has not yet been published. The zonings and proposals maps in the Belfast Urban Area Plan 2001 remain part of the statutory local development plan (“Departmental Development Plan”) until the Local Policies Plan is adopted.
6.4	Operational policies – the Plan Strategy contains a range of operational policies relevant to consideration of the application, which are set out in the following section of this report.).
6.5	Proposals Maps – until such time as the Local Policies Plan is adopted, the Council must have regard to the land-use zonings, designations and proposals maps in the Belfast Urban Area Plan 2001, both versions of the draft Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan (v2004 and v2014) (draft BMAP 2015) and other relevant area plans. The weight to be afforded to these proposals maps is a matter for the decision maker. It is considered that significant weight should be given to the proposals map in draft BMAP 2015 (v2014) given its advanced stage in the development process, save for retail policies that relate to Sprucefield which remain contentious.
7.0	Key Issues
7.1	The key issues for consideration of the application are set out below: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Impact on the architectural and historic qualities of the Listed Building
7.2	<i>Impact on the architectural and historic qualities of the Listed Building</i>
7.2.1	Section 91 (2) of the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 applies which states ‘the Department must have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.’
7.2.2	Policy BH1 of the Plan Strategy provides policy for the extension or alteration of a listed building and four criteria are to be met which are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> f. The works preserve, restore and complement the building’s features of special architectural or historical importance to ensure the existing building remains intact and unimpaired; g. The design respects the essential character of the existing building and/or setting; h. The proposal makes use of quality materials and appropriate detailing sympathetic with the existing building and/or setting; and i. In the case of extensions, they shall be subservient to the existing building with regard to height, scale, massing, form and alignment;
7.2.3	Policy BH1 goes on to state there will be a presumption in favour of retaining listed buildings. Partial demolition of parts of listed buildings will be wholly exceptional and only acceptable where an alteration or extension proposal has been agreed and that demolition is required to facilitate it. The Strategic Planning Policy Statement essentially repeats this policy approach.
7.2.4	Policy BH2, Section 7.4.16, emphasises that new development within conservation areas should be sensitive to its context, particularly in terms of massing, scale, elevational appearance, materials, and overall quality. The policy seeks to protect and reinforce the character of the area by ensuring that new development respects the established built form and does not compromise key views within, into, or out of the conservation area. Development should complement the surrounding

	architectural style and materials to avoid the erosion of character caused by inappropriate design or scale.
7.2.5	The final design of the window is not yet available however the proposed window will be carefully designed and constructed using traditional techniques, including cutting, painting, weatherproofing, and installation, to ensure consistency with the existing stained-glass windows in the area. The window will match the scale of the original, preserving the visual harmony of the building and contributing to the overall integrity of the conservation area. This approach aligns with the policy's objective of reinforcing the area's historic character and maintaining the architectural coherence of the built environment.
8.0	Recommendation
8.1	Having regard to the development plan and other material considerations, the proposal is considered acceptable. It is recommended that Listed Building Consent is granted.
8.2	Delegated authority is sought for the Director of Planning and Building Control to finalise the wording of the conditions and deal with any other issues that arise, provided that they are not substantive.
Draft Conditions	
<p>1. The works hereby permitted shall be begun not later than the expiration of 5 years beginning with the date on which this consent is granted.</p> <p>Reason: As required by Section 94 of the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011.</p> <p>2. Prior to installation of the window hereby consented, the original window must be carefully removed, retained completely intact and carefully stored, for any potential future use on the estate.</p> <p>Reason: To ensure an important architectural feature of the listed building is preserved.</p> <p>3. Prior to installation the final design of the new window shall be submitted to and agreed in writing with the Council and thereafter retained as agreed.</p> <p>Reason: To ensure the listed building is preserved.</p>	