

**Development Management Officer Report
Committee Application**

Summary	
Committee Meeting Date: 15 Dec 2015	Item Number:
Application ID: LA04/2015/0675/F	Target Date:
Proposal: Change of use and extension of existing office building to provide hotel accommodation (58 Bedrooms) with associated bar and restaurant	Location: 75-81 Victoria Street Belfast BT1 4PB
Referral Route:	
Major application	
Recommendation:	Approval
Applicant Name and Address: Cathedral Leisure Ltd. 3 Hill Street Belfast BT1 2LA	Agent Name and Address: ADO (Belfast) Ltd. 67 Edenderry Village Belfast BT8 8LQ
Executive Summary:	
<p>The application seeks full planning permission for the change of use and extension of existing office building to provide hotel accommodation (58 Bedrooms) with associated bar and restaurant. The key issues in the assessment of this application are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The principle of the change of use to hotel at this location; • The loss of existing office space; • The impact on the character and appearance of the City Conservation Area; and • The impact on existing roads infrastructure; and <p>The proposal has been assessed against the following Policies – Strategic Planning Policy for Northern Ireland, Planning Policy Statement 4: Planning and Economic Development, Planning Policy Statement 3: Access Movement and Parking and Planning Policy Statement 6: Planning, Archaeology and the Built Heritage.</p> <p>Transport NI, NIWater, NIEA Historic Monuments Unit, NIEA Historic Buildings Unit and Belfast City Council’s Environmental Protection Unit have offered no objections to the proposal and standard conditions are to be applied. Rivers Agency requested that a Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) be carried out. The FRA was subsequently submitted and is considered acceptable.</p> <p>No letters of objection have been received.</p> <p>The site is located within the Belfast City Centre as designated in the Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan. It is also within the City Centre Conservation Area and the Old City Character Area (Designation CC009). The principle of the hotel use is acceptable given the city centre location and the fact that it does not conflict with area plan designations. The proposed is primarily for a change of use and the alterations and refurbishment will enhance the quality of the building and will have no detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.</p>	

The proposed is considered to be in accordance with the development plan, relevant planning policies, and other material considerations, it is recommended that the proposal should be approved subject to conditions.

Case Officer Report

Site Location Plan



Characteristics of the Site and Area	
1.0	Description of Proposed Development
1.1	Change of use and extension of existing office building to provide hotel accommodation (58 Bedrooms) with associated bar and restaurant. The extension involves an additional storey recessed back to facilitate 10 bedrooms.
2.0	Description of Site
	Established 4 storey structure on the corner of Victoria Street and Ann Street. Finished in dark reflective glazing.
Planning Assessment of Policy and other Material Considerations	
3.0	Planning History
	Z/2008/0115/F- 9-storey office building including ground floor retail unit at 75-81 Victoria St- Appeal Dismissed Z/2008/0352/F-Demolition of existing building and erection of 10-storey mixed use scheme comprising retail at ground floor and apartment development of 53 units above at 75-81 Victoria St- Appeal dismissed
4.0	Policy Framework
4.1	Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan 2015
4.2	Strategic Planning Policy Statement for Northern Ireland Planning Policy Statement 3 - Access, Movement and Parking Planning Policy Statement 4 – Planning and Economic Development Planning Policy Statement 6 - Planning, Archaeology and the Built Heritage
5.0	Statutory Consultees
	Transport NI – No Objection NIEA Historic Buildings Unit – No objection NIEA Historic Monuments Unit – No objection NIWater- No objection River Agency- No Objection
6.0	Non-Statutory Consultees
	Environmental Health BCC – No objection
7.0	Representations
	None received
8.0	Other Material Considerations
	City Centre Conservation Area guidance document
9.0	Assessment
9.1	The key issues in the assessment of the proposed development are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The acceptability of proposed hotel use at this location - Loss of existing office space - Impact upon character and appearance of the City Centre Conservation Area

	<p>- The impact on existing roads infrastructure</p> <p><u>Principle of development</u></p>
9.2	<p>The site is located within the development limits and within the Old City Character Area (CC009) and City Centre Conservation Area as designated in BMAP 2015. The presumption is therefore in favour of development subject to the planning considerations detailed below.</p> <p><u>Hotel Use</u></p>
9.3	<p>In terms of the proposed hotel use, the site is within a prime city centre location. The proposed hotel use will ensure the re-use of the existing building which is currently vacant and will bring increased vitality and viability onto the City Centre.</p> <p><u>Loss of office space</u></p>
9.4	<p>The proposal has been assessed under Policy PED7 of PPS4. Given the underuse of the existing office units on the site over the last number of years and the undoubted contribution to the local economy that the proposed hotel would bring the proposal is deemed acceptable on what is a prime city centre site ideally situated for such a use.</p> <p><u>Assessment Against Urban Design Criteria in BMAP 2015</u></p>
9.5	<p>The site is located within the Old City Character Area as designated in the BMAP 2015. This sets out a number of urban design criteria for the area. One of the criteria relates to new development being a minimum height of 6 storey and a maximum of 7 storeys. The proposal, however, is primarily a change of use with an additional storey on top and whilst lower than the recommended height, is acceptable as these criteria are directed primarily at new build proposals.</p> <p><u>Impact on the setting of nearby listed building</u></p>
9.6	<p>The proposal has been assessed against policy BH11 of PPS6. NIEA Historic Buildings Unit has viewed the proposal in respect to St George's Church, 105 High Street, Belfast (HB26/50/045) a grade A listed building of special architectural and historic interest as set out in Section 80 and protected under the Planning Act (NI) 2011. Historic Buildings Unit (HBU) has considered the effect of the proposal on the listed building and has concluded that is sufficiently removed to remain unaffected. It is therefore considered that the proposal complies with Policy BH 11.</p> <p><u>Impact on the City Centre Conservation Area</u></p>
9.7	<p>The proposal has been assessed against Policy BH12 of PPS6. The site is located within the City Centre Conservation Area as designated in the Area Plan. Given the built form, character and massing of the existing building and the sympathetic additional recessed fifth storey it is considered that it will improve the overall aesthetics of the existing building. The alterations and refurbishment will enhance the quality of the building and thus will have no detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. The proposal therefore complies with Policy BH 12.</p> <p><u>Impact on Area of Archaeological Potential</u></p>
9.8	<p>The proposal has been assessed against Policy BH4 of PPS6. NIEA Historic Monuments Unit has considered the impact of the proposal and is content, conditional on the</p>

	<p>agreement and implementation of a developer-funded programme of archaeological works to identify and record any archaeological remains in advance of construction or to provide for their preservation in situ. Conditions are detailed below.</p> <p><u>Traffic and Parking</u></p>
9.9	<p>The proposal has been assessed against PPS 3. Transport NI responded requesting clarification on a number of points. These included information on the set down and pick up area for taxis, clarification on where the main entrance to the hotel is and further information on cycle parking. Belfast Planning Office has discussed these outstanding matters with Transport NI and given the minor nature of these Transport NI has decided to offer no objections on the basis that the issues can be dealt with by condition.</p> <p><u>Flooding</u></p>
9.10	<p>The proposal has also been assessed against Policies FLD 1 of PPS15. Rivers Agency asked Belfast Planning Office (BPO) whether the proposal was considered to be an exception to FLD 1 and if BPO considered it to be such then a Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) was required. Whilst the proposal does not fall neatly into one of the exceptions specified under FLD 1, weight must be attached to the fact it involves a change of use to an existing building. It is further considered that the ground floor of the proposed hotel only contains the reception and break out areas. All the bedrooms are on the 1st floor and above. It is therefore considered that the proposal is in broad compliance with FLD 1 consequently Belfast Planning Service requested a FRA which was submitted on 5th October 2015. Rivers Agency having considered the FRA is now content. The proposal therefore complies with PPS 15.</p> <p><u>Other Matters</u></p>
9.11	<p>Environmental Services Department has offered no objections to the proposal and have requested that consideration is given to conditions being attached to any approval, should approval be granted, to ensure the occupiers of nearby commercial premises are not affected by odours from cooking operations associated with the hotel development. These conditions are detailed below.</p>
10.0	<p>Summary of Recommendation: Approval</p>
10.1	<p>The proposal is in accordance with the development plan and policy context and other material considerations as set out above. The proposal is considered acceptable and approval is recommended subject to conditions.</p>
11.0	<p>Conditions</p>
11.1	<p>1. As required by Section 61 of the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011, the development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of 5 years from the date of this permission.</p> <p>Reason: Time Limit.</p> <p>2. No site works of any nature or development shall take place until a programme of archaeological work has been implemented, in accordance with a written scheme and programme prepared by a qualified archaeologist, submitted by the applicant</p>

	<p>and approved by the Department. The programme should provide for the identification and evaluation of archaeological remains within the site, for mitigation of the impacts of development, through excavation recording or by preservation of remains, and for preparation of an archaeological report.</p> <p>Reason: to ensure that archaeological remains within the application site are properly identified, and protected or appropriately recorded.</p> <p>3. Access shall be afforded to the site at all reasonable times to any archaeologist nominated by the Department to observe the operations and to monitor the implementation of archaeological requirements.</p> <p>Reason: to monitor programmed works in order to ensure that identification, evaluation and appropriate recording of any archaeological remains, or any other specific work required by condition, or agreement is satisfactorily completed.</p> <p>4. Prior to operations commencing, a proprietary odour abatement system shall be installed to suppress and disperse odours created from cooking operations within the kitchen. The outlet from the extract ventilation ducting shall be suitably located and directed away from commercial premises.</p> <p>Reason: In the interests of Environmental Health.</p> <p>5. The development hereby permitted shall not become operational until covered cycle parking facilities for a minimum of 4No. cycles have been provided within the site.</p> <p>Reason: To promote the use of alternative modes of transport in accordance with sustainable transportation principles.</p> <p>6. The development hereby permitted shall not become operational until a Travel Plan has been prepared in general accordance with the framework Travel Plan contained within the document Travel Plan & Service Management Plan, dated October 2015.</p> <p>Reason: To promote the use of alternative modes of transport in accordance with sustainable transportation principles.</p> <p>7. The development hereby permitted shall operate in accordance with the Service Management Plan contained within the document Travel Plan & Service Management Plan, dated October 2015.</p> <p>Reason: In the interests of road safety and the convenience of road users.</p> <p>8. Doors shall not open out over the public footway.</p> <p>Reason: In the interests of pedestrian safety.</p>
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ANNEX	
Date Valid	25th June 2015
Date First Advertised	31st July 2015
Date Last Advertised	
<p>Details of Neighbour Notification (all addresses)</p> <p>The Owner/Occupier, 105 High Street,Town Parks,Belfast,Antrim,BT1 2AG, The Owner/Occupier, 22 Church Lane,Town Parks,Belfast,Antrim,BT1 4QN, The Owner/Occupier, 22 Church Lane,Town Parks,Belfast,Antrim,BT1 4QN, The Owner/Occupier, 28 Church Lane,Town Parks,Belfast,Antrim,BT1 4QN, The Owner/Occupier, 30 Church Lane,Town Parks,Belfast,Antrim,BT1 4QN, The Owner/Occupier, 40 Church Lane,Town Parks,Belfast,Antrim,BT1 4QN, The Owner/Occupier, 42 Church Lane,Town Parks,Belfast,Antrim,BT1 4QN, The Owner/Occupier, 42 Church Lane,Town Parks,Belfast,Antrim,BT1 4QN, The Owner/Occupier, 46 Church Lane,Town Parks,Belfast,Antrim,BT1 4QN, The Owner/Occupier, 66 Ann Street,Town Parks,Belfast,Antrim,BT1 4EH, The Owner/Occupier, 70-74,Ann Street,Town Parks,Belfast,Antrim,BT1 4EH, The Owner/Occupier, 70-74,Ann Street,Town Parks,Belfast,Antrim,BT1 4EH, The Owner/Occupier, 70-74,Ann Street,Town Parks,Belfast,Antrim,BT1 4EH, The Owner/Occupier, 75-81,Victoria Street,Town Parks,Belfast,Antrim,BT1 4PA, The Owner/Occupier, 75-81,Victoria Street,Town Parks,Belfast,Antrim,BT1 4PA, The Owner/Occupier, 76 Ann Street,Town Parks,Belfast,Antrim,BT1 4EH, The Owner/Occupier, 80 Ann Street,Town Parks,Belfast,Antrim,BT1 4EH, The Owner/Occupier, Canston House,38 Church Lane,Town Parks,Belfast,Antrim,BT1 4QH, The Owner/Occupier, Lagan House,79 Victoria Street,Town Parks,Belfast,Antrim,BT1 3GN, The Owner/Occupier, St George's Parish Church (c Of I),High Street,Town Parks,Belfast,Antrim,BT1 2AG, The Owner/Occupier, St George's Parish Church (c Of I),High Street,Town Parks,Belfast,Antrim,BT1 2AG, The Owner/Occupier, St George's Parish Church (c Of I),High Street,Town Parks,Belfast,Antrim,BT1 2AG,</p>	

The Owner/Occupier,	
Date of Last Neighbour Notification	3 rd August 2015
Date of EIA Determination	N/A
ES Requested	No
Planning History	
<p>Ref ID: Z/2008/0612/F Proposal: Retail led, comprehensive mixed use scheme including residential, catering, restaurants, cinema, malls/covered streets supported by associated servicing facilities and underground car parking. Address: Site bounded by Chichester Street, Victoria Street, Ann Street, Arthur Street, William Street South, Montgomery Street, Belfast Decision: Decision Date: 22.07.2008</p>	
<p>Ref ID: Z/2008/0352/F Proposal: Demolition of existing building and erection of 10-storey mixed use scheme comprising retail at ground floor and apartment development of 53 units above. Address: 75-81 Victoria Street, Belfast Decision: Decision Date:</p>	
<p>Ref ID: Z/2008/0335/DCA Proposal: Demolition of existing building. Address: 75-81 Victoria Street, Town Parks, Belfast BT1 4PA Decision: Decision Date:</p>	
<p>Ref ID: Z/2008/0154/Q Proposal: Advertisements and shop fronts Address: Victoria Square, Belfast Decision: Decision Date:</p>	
<p>Ref ID: Z/2008/0115/F Proposal: Demolition of existing building and erection of 9-storey office building including ground floor retail unit. Address: 75-81 Victoria Street, Belfast Decision: Decision Date:</p>	

Ref ID: Z/2006/0141/E

Proposal: Request for opinion if proposed works would or would not be an EIA development and of information to be included in any EIA in connection with the Belfast City Centre Public Realm.

Address: Belfast City Centre

Decision:

Decision Date:

Ref ID: Z/2001/1631/F

Proposal: Retail-led, comprehensive, major, mixed use scheme, including, offices, leisure, catering, residential, and civic/cultural activities, supported by associated servicing facilities and underground car parking.

Address: Site bounded by Chichester Street, Victoria Street, Ann Street, Arthur Street, William Street South, Montgomery Street:Including all,addresses therein.

Decision:

Decision Date: 25.04.2003

Drawing Numbers and Title

01, 02, 06, 07, 08, 09, 10, 11

Notification to Department (if relevant)

Date of Notification to Department:

Response of Department:

Representations from Elected Members:

None