

Committee Application

Development Management Report	
Application ID: LA04/2018/2281/F	Date of Committee: 13 November 2018
Proposal: Alteration to existing building comprising removal of existing cladding panels and erection of weather protection in the form of steel framing system, insulation and Siniat Board	Location: The Gas Works 24 Cromac Place Belfast BT7 2JB
Referral Route: Belfast City Council has an estate in the land	
Recommendation:	Approval
Applicant Name and Address: Lloyds Banking Group 24 Cromac Place Belfast BT7 2JB	Agent Name and Address: Nigel Cussen Pegasus Group Pavillion Court Green Lane Garforth LS25 2AF
Executive Summary: Full permission is sought for external alterations to 24 Cromac Place comprising the removal of existing cladding panels and the erection of weather protection in the form of steel framing system, insulation and Siniat Board. The key issue in assessment of the proposed development is the impact of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area. It is advised that the proposal would not have an adverse impact on the character and appearance of the area provided that it is implemented on a temporary basis. A condition limiting the proposal to a temporary period is recommended. Recommendation It is recommended that the application is approved.	

<p>2.0</p> <p>2.1</p> <p>2.1</p>	<p>Description of Site</p> <p>The site is located at 24 Cromac Place in the former Gas Works site of Belfast City Centre. It consists of a 5-storey commercial building currently occupied by Lloyds Banking Group. The character of the area is representative of a business park and made up of office developments. A railway line runs to the east of the site, beyond which is the River Lagan.</p> <p>Site Location</p>  <p>The map shows a plan view of the site at Cromac Place. A red outline highlights the site boundary. To the east of the site, there are railway lines and the River Lagan. Labels include 'CROMAC PLACE', 'RIVER LAGAN', and 'CROMAC STREET'. A dashed line indicates a boundary or boundary extension. The map also shows surrounding buildings and infrastructure.</p>
<p>Planning Assessment of Policy and other Material Considerations</p>	
<p>3.0</p>	<p>Site History</p> <p>LA04/2018/1453/F - Lands at and adjacent to plot 4 Cromac Place - Erection of 6No. storey Grade A office development, incorporating a ground floor coffee bar, associated car parking, part retention and reconfiguration of existing car park, and all ancillary site works and landscaping – UNDER CONSIDERATION</p> <p>LA04/2016/2267/F - Site C Gasworks Office Park - Erection of office building (ranging in height from four to six storeys) and associated access road, re-configuration of existing car park and ancillary works – UNDER CONSIDERATION</p> <p>Z/2004/1803/F - HBOS Call Centre, 24 Cromac Place - Proposed increase in height of existing railing along pedestrian walkway - PERMISSION GRANTED 09.11.2004</p> <p>Z/2000/2922/A - Sites 5 & 6 Gasworks Development Area, Ormeau Road - 'Halifax' Logo sign - PERMISSION GRANTED 17.02.2001</p> <p>Z/1999/2850/F - Sites 5 & 6 Gasworks Development Area, Ormeau Road - New call centre with associated car parking - PERMISSION GRANTED 02.12.1999</p>

4.0	Policy Framework
4.1	BUAP 2001 Draft Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan 2004 Version of Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan published 03.09.14 Strategic Planning Policy Statement (SPPS) Planning Policy Statement 4: Planning and Economic Development - Policy PED 9
5.0	Statutory Consultees Responses
5.1	None
6.0	Non Statutory Consultees Responses
6.3	None
7.0	Representations
7.1	The application has been neighbour notified and advertised in the local press. No comments have been received.
8.0	Other Material Considerations
8.1	None
9.0	Assessment
	<u>Plan Status/Relevant Policy/Constraints</u>
9.1	Following the recent Court of Appeal decision on BMAP, the extant development plan is now the BUAP. However, given the stage at which the Draft BMAP had reached pre-adoption through a period of independent examination, the policies within the version of BMAP purported to be adopted still carry weight and are a material consideration in the determination of planning applications. The weight to be afforded is a matter of judgement for the decision maker.
9.2	The site is within the development limit of Belfast as designated in both the BUAP and the draft BMAP. The site is located within the Main Office Area in the Draft Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan 2015 and is white land in the adopted Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan 2015.
9.3	The Strategic Planning Policy for Northern Ireland (SPPS) is a material consideration for all decisions on individual planning applications and provides general policy context. PPS 4 also provides relevant policy guidance.
	<u>SPPS</u>
9.4	Under the SPPS, the guiding principle for planning authorities in determining planning applications is that sustainable development should be permitted, having regard to the development plan and all other material considerations, unless the proposed development will cause demonstrable harm to interests of acknowledged importance. In practice this means that development that accords with an up-to-date development plan should be approved and

	<p>proposed development that conflicts with an up-to-date development plan should be refused, unless other material considerations indicate otherwise.</p> <p><u>Consideration</u></p>
9.5	<p>The main issue for the assessment of this proposal is its impact on the character and appearance of the area.</p> <p><u>Impact on the Character and Appearance of the Area</u></p>
9.6	<p>In a supporting statement the applicants state that the external appearance of the building has become dated and the external façade needs replacing for health and safety reasons. Remedial works to the building will comprise two phases. The current application relates to Phase 1, which is to remove the existing panels and to provide weather protection. Phase 2 will consist of the final cladding for the exterior of the building and new landscaping for which separate planning permission will be sought. The applicants advise that the recladding work (Phase 2) is envisaged to be completed by February 2019, subject to approval.</p>
9.7	<p>Following the removal of the existing cladding panels, weather protection is to be erected in the form of a steel framing system, insulation and Siniat sheathing board. The Siniat board is to be off-white/cream in colour and is to be fixed to the stripped back façade. Existing windows are to be closed with temporary stud walls.</p>
9.8	<p>Policy PED 9 of PPS 6 provides general criteria for economic development against which the proposed works can be assessed. The proposed preparatory works do not affect surrounding land uses. The Radisson Blu Hotel is situated adjacent to the west of the site; however, it is not considered that the proposed works will impact on the amenity of hotel residents. The site is not within a conservation area or other designation and the building is not listed. Other than associated construction noise it is not considered that the works will create unacceptable noise or nuisance.</p>
9.9	<p>The proposal before the Planning Committee relates only to the external appearance of elevations and the façade of the building. The proposed preparatory works will only affect the appearance of the building on a temporary basis prior to its recladding. It is considered that the visual impact of the proposed off-white/cream sheathing board is acceptable only on a temporary basis. No changes to the form of the building or to existing access arrangements are proposed. With regard to landscaping, the Phase 1 works will require the removal of landscaping surrounding the building to allow construction access; however, a comprehensive landscape scheme is expected to form part of the subsequent application for the Phase 2 works.</p>
9.10	<p>Ideally both the Phase 1 and Phase 2 applications would be assessed and decisions issued concurrently, to ensure that the recladding work takes place in a timely manner following the preparatory weather proofing works and to ensure against the building remaining unfinished for an unforeseeable period. However, it is acknowledged that there is an urgent need to commence the preparatory works on health and safety grounds and that the subsequent application will be subject to design consultation. Therefore, it is recommended that planning permission should be granted for only a period of up to one year. At or before that point the building should be restored to its previous appearance or in accordance with a further planning permission if granted (such as the Phase 2 works).</p>
9.11	<p>The proposed works are considered to be compliant with PED 9 and the SPPS.</p>

9.12	<p><u>Conclusion</u></p> <p>It is considered that the proposed preparatory works comply with relevant policy and will provide a later opportunity to significantly enhance the appearance of the building and its wider setting. Approval recommended, subject to conditions.</p>
10.0	<p>Summary of Recommendation: Approval</p>
11.0	<p>Conditions</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of 5 years from the date of this permission. Reason: As required by Section 61 of the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011. 2. The façade improvement preparatory works hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with Approved Drawing No. 03A, date stamped 17 October 2018. Reason: In the interests of visual amenity. 3. No later than 12 months from the date of this permission, the cladding of the building shall be restored to its original appearance or to an alternative design in accordance with any subsequent extant planning permission. Reason: Temporary planning permission is granted on the basis that the proposal is a temporary solution for the cladding of the building and would be unacceptable in visual terms if permanently retained.
<p>Notification to Department (if relevant)</p> <p>N/A</p>	
<p>Representations from Elected members:</p> <p>N/A</p>	