

Planning Committee

Thursday, 23rd January, 2020

PRE DETERMINATION HEARING

Members present: Councillor Brooks (Deputy Chairperson);
Alderman Rodgers; and
Councillors Collins, Garrett,
Groogan, Hanvey, Hussey, Maskey,
Murphy and O'Hara.

In attendance: Mr. E. Baker, Planning Manager
(Development Management);
Ms. N. Largey, Divisional Solicitor; and
Mrs. L. McLornan, Democratic Services Officer.

(Councillor Brooks in the Chair)

Apologies

Apologies for inability to attend were reported from Councillor Carson (Chairperson) and Councillors McKeown and Nicholl.

Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were recorded.

Pre Determination Hearing for application LA04/2018/2470/O, LA04/2018/2464/F and LA04/2018/2445/LBC - Mixed use regeneration and development of vacant surface level car park and refurbishment of existing listed Butchers building, including construction of new fixed use buildings (heights varying between 3-9 storeys comprising basement level car parking, ground floor retail/restaurant/coffee shop/workspace uses, with Grade A and SME offices above, provision of pedestrian accesses from Gresham and Winetavern Street; associated public realm, landscaping, associated plant, and all site and access works on vacant lands at existing level Carpark bounded by Winetavern Street Gresham Street and North Street, including 108 North Street and 1 Gresham Street

The Deputy Chairperson welcomed the Members to the Pre-Determination Hearing for the application.

He reminded the Members that the objective of the meeting was to focus on the material planning considerations and to facilitate the Committee in making its determination of the application. The Committee was reminded that no decision may be reached at the Hearing, as Committee Members and planners might wish to consider the

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views made prior to making a determination at the scheduled Committee meeting later that evening.

The Principal Planning officer provided the Committee with the principal aspects of the application.

He explained that the site lay within the northern part of the city centre, which was poorly defined in terms of land use and built form. He advised the Committee that it was zoned as an opportunity site in the draft Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan (BMAP) and that the proposal would renovate a listed three-storey building, develop an surface level carpark with a piece of high quality architecture which drew upon the industrial heritage of the area, creating a well-defined public space and providing a landmark building on one of the main arterial routes into the city centre.

He reminded the Committee that it had initially considered the application at its meeting of 11th June, 2019 where it had resolved to approve it with conditions. The Members were reminded that, under the Planning (Notification of Applications) Direction 2017, it had been necessary to notify the Department for Infrastructure (DfI) because the resolution to approve the application had been contrary to the views of a statutory consultee, namely, the Historic Environment Division (HED).

The Principal Planning officer explained that the DfI had written to the Council in December confirming that it did not consider it necessary for the application to be referred to it for determination and that, in such circumstances, the Council was required to hold a Pre-Determination Hearing to give the applicant and interested parties the opportunity to appear before and be heard by a Committee of the Council.

He advised the Committee that the original Committee report and the accompanying Listed Building Consent and Full reports for works to the listed Butchers Building were included in Members' packs.

The Principal Planning officer advised that HED objected to the application as it believed that the setting of the Listed Buildings in the vicinity of the site would be affected adversely by the scale and massing of the new buildings.

He advised the Members that, since the June meeting of the Committee, the Council had received no representations in relation to the application.

The Deputy Chairperson welcomed Mr. T. Stokes, agent, Mr. S. Tyler, architect, and Mr. A. Stewart, applicant to the meeting. Together they advised the Committee that they had undertaken extensive consultation in relation to the scheme and highlighted that no objections had been received. They advised the Members that the application comprised a high quality scheme for a vacant brownfield site, the design of which reflected the historical mill buildings of Belfast.

The Deputy Chairperson thanked the representatives for their presentation and, as there were no questions from the Committee, they retired from the meeting.

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The Committee noted the information which had been provided and noted that no decision would be taken on the application until later that evening, at the monthly meeting.

Chairperson