

Development Management Report

Committee Date: 10th March 2026

Application ID: LA04/2024/0569/O

Proposal: Outline planning permission with all matters reserved for independent living (Use Class C1) units and up to 62no. assisted living units (Use Class C3A), associated internal access roads, communal open space, revised access from Castleview Road, associated car parking, servicing, amenity space and landscaping. Demolition of dwellings at Castleview Road (nos. 2, 4, 6, 16, 18, 20, 22, 24, 26, 28 & 30) and Summerhill Parade (nos. 18, 20 & 22).

Location: Stormont Hotel, 587 Upper Newtownards Road BT4 3LP and adjacent properties at Castleview Road (nos. 2, 4, 6, 16, 18, 20, 22, 24, 26, 28 & 30), Summerhill Parade (nos. 18, 20 & 22) and rear of 160 Barnetts Road, Belfast

Referral Route: Application for Major development

Recommendation: Approval subject to conditions and Section 76 planning agreement

Applicant Name and Address:
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Date Valid: 04/04/2024

Target Date: 31/10/2024

Contact Officer: Ed Baker, Planning Manager (Development Management)

Executive Summary:

This application seeks outline planning permission for the redevelopment of the western part of the car park of the Stormont Hotel and adjoining residential properties for a residential scheme consisting of up to 62 Class 3A assisted living units and an unspecified number of Class C1 independent living dwellings. The proposal includes demolition of 14 existing dwellings. All matters (including the number of Class 1 independent dwellings) are reserved for subsequent approval.

The proposal is Phase 2 of a two-phase wider scheme to redevelop the hotel site into a retirement village. Phase 1 comprises the conversion of the hotel building into a 97-bed care home and medical facility and is subject to a separate application (LA04/2024/0570/F) to be considered at this same Planning Committee meeting (also see Planning History section).

Phase 2 is the subject of this application and would see the subdivision of the Stormont Hotel property, separating the majority of the car park to the west from the hotel building.

This outline application site comprises the Stormont Hotel western car park and 14 existing dwellings, which are proposed to be demolished.

The key issues for consideration of the application are set out below.

- Principle of development
- Housing density
- Affordable housing
- Housing density
- Adaptable and accessible accommodation
- Design, Placemaking and Impact on Amenity
- Transport
- Healthy Communities
- Built Heritage
- Natural heritage
- Climate change
- Flood Risk and Drainage
- Waste-water infrastructure
- Environmental protection
- Waste management
- Section 76 planning agreement
- Pre-application Community Consultation

The Council has received 48 third-party representations, from 28 persons all of which are objections to the scheme. These are summarised in the main report.

No objections have been received from consultees, subject to conditions.

The principle of the proposal is considered compliant with relevant policies. Subject to assessment of the detail at the reserved matters stage, it is considered that the site can accommodate the proposed development in a manner which is in keeping with the character and appearance of the area, not detrimental to local amenity, and served by appropriate access.

A Section 76 planning agreement is required to secure the following planning obligations:

- Balance of uses between Class C1 independent living and C3a assisted living.
- Affordable housing – minimum 20% of the Class C1 units as affordable housing.
- Identification of the Class 3a assist living units and requirement for these to be managed by a registered care provider.
- Implementation of the Travel Plan and associated Travel Fund.
- Construction Employability and Skills Plan.
- Open Space Management Plan.
- Linkage to planning application LA04/2024/0570/F – prevention of the continued use of the hotel building on implementation of the outline permission (as the scheme would result in a loss of significant parking for the hotel).

Recommendation

Having regard to the Development Plan and material considerations, it is recommended that planning permission is granted subject to conditions.

Delegated authority is sought for the Director of Planning and Building Control to finalise the wording of the conditions and Section 76 planning agreement, and deal with and any other issues that arise, provided the issues are not substantive.

1.0	<p>Characteristics of the Site and Area</p>
1.1	<p>The application site is located on the Upper Newtownards Road opposite the Stormont estate. The site is currently occupied by a hotel and extensive car park. The hotel complex sits on 2.2 ha of land, and comprises a 105-bedroom hotel, together with two restaurants, wedding, meeting, and conference facilities. The hotel has been extended and renovated in different styles on a number of occasions.</p>
1.2	<p>The hotel fronts onto the Upper Newtownards Road, with its main vehicular access from the road dropping some eight metres to a main car park below, before rising up again to a drop off point outside its double height, frameless glazed, entrance. Residential development abuts the rectangular shaped site on three sides. There are also additional accesses from Castlehill Road to the west and Summerhill Park to the east.</p>
1.3	<p>The application site comprises the western car park of the Stormont Hotel, and fourteen existing dwellings. These include a row of semi-detached dwellings that back onto the east boundary of the car park at Castleview Road (Nos. 2, 4, 6, 16, 18, 20, 22, 24, 26, 28 & 30); 3no dwellings Summerhill Parade (Nos. 18, 20 & 22); and part of the rear garden of 160 Barnetts Road, Belfast.</p>
1.4	<p>The surrounding area is an established residential area, characterised by two-storey detached and semi-detached houses. The Stormont estate and parliament buildings are opposite the application site.</p>
	<p>Description of Proposed Development</p>
1.5	<p>The application seeks outline planning permission for the redevelopment of the western part of the car park of the Stormont Hotel and adjoining residential properties for a residential scheme consisting of up to 62 x Class 3a assisted living units and an unspecified number of Class C1 independent living dwellings. The proposal includes demolition of fourteen existing dwellings.</p>
1.6	<p>All matters (including the final number of Class C1 independent living dwellings) are reserved for subsequent approval.</p>
1.7	<p>The indicative plans indicate a shared access with the hotel building (proposed as a care home and medical facility under application LA04/2024/0570/F) and access from Castleview Road.</p>
1.8	<p>The proposal is Phase 2 of a two-phase wider scheme to redevelop the hotel site into a retirement village. Phase 1 comprises the conversion of the hotel building into a 97-bed care home and medical facility and is subject to a separate application (LA04/2024/0570/F) to be considered at this same Planning Committee meeting (also see Planning History section).</p>
1.9	<p>Phase 2 is the subject of this application and would see the subdivision of the Stormont Hotel property, separating the majority of the car park to the west from the hotel building.</p>
1.10	<p>The proposal was subject of a Pre-Application Discussion (PAD), although not all the issues were resolved at the point at which the application was made.</p>

<p>2.0</p> <p>2.1</p> <p>2.2</p> <p>2.3</p> <p>2.4</p>	<p>PLANNING HISTORY</p> <p>The proposal was subject to Pre-Application Discussion (PAD) with officers and Proposal of Application Notice (PAN):</p> <p><i>Application site and hotel building to the east:</i></p> <p>LA04/2022/1793/PAD - Mixed-use development, comprising retirement living (Use Class C1), care home (Use Class C3) and medical facility (Use Class C3 or D1), associated access, amenity space, landscaping and car parking. Decided.</p> <p>LA04/2022/1211/PAN - Mixed-use development, comprising retirement living (Use Class C1), care home (Use Class C3) and medical facility (Use Class C3 or D1), associated access, amenity space, landscaping and car parking. PAD concluded.</p> <p><i>Hotel building to the east:</i></p> <p>LA04/2024/0570/F - Stormont Hotel, 587 Upper Newtownards Road BT4 3LP and adjacent property 37-39 Summerhill Park, Belfast. Change of use of from hotel, conference centre and offices (sui generis) to a 97-bed care home (Use Class C3(b) and 1,559sqm diagnostic medical facility (Use Class D1(a), associated access, car parking, landscaping and open space. Pending.</p>
<p>3.0</p> <p>3.1</p> <p>3.2</p> <p>3.3</p>	<p>PLANNING POLICY</p> <p>Development Plan – Plan Strategy</p> <p><u>Belfast Local Development Plan: Plan Strategy 2035</u></p> <p>Relevant Planning Policies:</p> <p>Policies in the Plan Strategy relevant to the application include the following:</p> <p><i>Strategic Policies:</i></p> <p>Policy SP1A – managing growth and supporting infrastructure delivery Policy SP2 – sustainable development Policy SP3 – improving health and wellbeing Policy SP5 – positive placemaking Policy SP6 – environmental resilience Policy SP7 – connectivity Policy SD2 – Settlement Areas</p> <p><i>Operational Policies:</i></p> <p>Policy HOU1 – Accommodating New Homes Policy HOU2 – Windfall Housing Policy HOU3 – Protection of existing residential accommodation Policy HOU4 – Density of residential development Policy HOU5 – Affordable Housing Policy HOU6 – Housing Mix Policy HOU7 – Adaptable and accessible accommodation Policy HOU8 – Specialised residential accommodation Policy CI1 – Community Infrastructure Policy DES2 – Masterplanning approach for Major development</p>

	<p>Policy BH1 – Listed Buildings Policy TRAN 2 – Creating an Accessible Environment Policy TRAN 3 – Transport Assessment Policy ENV1 – Environmental Quality Policy ENV2 – Mitigating Environmental Change Policy ENV3 – Adopting to Environmental Change Policy ENV4 – Flood Risk Policy ENV5 – Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) Policy NH1 – Protection of Natural Heritage Resources Policy LC1 – Landscape Policy HC1 – Promoting healthy communities</p>
3.4	<p><u>Supplementary Planning Guidance</u></p> <p>Placemaking and Urban Design Residential Design Affordable Housing and Housing Mix Placemaking for Urban Design Masterplanning approach for Major developments Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems Transportation Planning and Flood Risk Waste Infrastructure Trees and Development Development Control Advice Note (DCAN) 15 – Vehicular Access Standards</p>
3.5	<p>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)</p>
3.6	<p>Regional Planning Policy Regional Development Strategy 2035 (RDS) Strategic Planning Policy Statement for Northern Ireland (SPPS) (Edition 2, 2026)</p>
3.7	<p>Other Material Considerations Developer Contribution Framework (2020) <i>Belfast Agenda</i> (Community Plan)</p>
4.0	CONSULTATIONS AND REPRESENTATIONS
4.1	<p><u>Statutory Consultees</u></p> <p>DFI Roads – No objection, subject to conditions. DFI Rivers – No objection NI Water – No objection DAERA NIEA – No objection subject to conditions DFC Historic Environment Division (HED) – No objection, subject to conditions</p>
4.2	<p><u>Non-Statutory Consultees</u> BCC Environmental Health – No objection, subject to conditions BCC Landscape Planning and Development Unit – No objection BCC LDP Housing – No objection BCC LDP Urban Design – No objection in principle BCC Economic Development Unit – No objection</p>

Northern Ireland Housing Executive – No objection
NIE – No objection
Shared Environmental Services (SES) – No objection, subject to conditions.

4.3

Representations

4.4

The application has been advertised in the press and neighbours notified. 48 third party representations have been received from 28 persons all of which are objections to the scheme. The points raised are summarised below.

Objections:

1. The development will affect existing property values.
2. No need for the retirement village in this area.
3. Antisocial behaviour within proposed communal areas.
4. Increased traffic and impact on parking and road safety in the area. The development will increase demand for on-street parking in the area as the site will not be able to accommodate the parking requirements.
5. Castlevie Road would need to become a one-way street to alleviate the increase in traffic using the access to the site from this street.
6. Vehicles parking at the hotel car park when events are on at the Stormont Estate and residents fear that the loss of access to parking will overflow onto the surrounding streets, blocking residential access/ egress.
7. Parking Regulation Order (TRO) / Travel Plan to encourage sustainable modes of transport.
8. The height of the proposed buildings will over-shadow the existing road and surrounds and result in loss of light into neighbouring houses.
9. Out of character with the surrounding area.
10. Loss of a substantial number of houses in the area will affect its character.
11. Over-development: the height/scale of the assisted living apartments on the Castlevie Road side of the site is vague "comprising predominantly detached and semi-detached (with some terraced) two and three storey retirement housing" and assurances sought to confirm that they would not exceed the current height of the existing semi-detached houses (16, 18, 20, 22, 24, 26, 28 & 30 on Castlevie Road).
12. Impact on privacy of existing homes from overlooking from proposed new houses.
13. The proposed development would take a considerable time to build – leading to substantial inconvenience to residents.
14. Impact on existing utilities and infrastructure: proposal will exacerbate existing flooding and sewerage issues and affect water pressure. The car park is within a 'floodplain'.
15. Impact of construction on the site will affect residents both in terms of site traffic, noise, and air quality from dirt and dust.
16. Replacement of two storey red brick houses on Castlevie Road with high rise buildings would be out of character with the housing in the area.
17. The use of the proposed houses on Castlevie Road as 'commercial multiple occupancy premises'.
18. Pollution from noise, dust and dirt during the construction phase.
19. Conversion of a hotel into a care home is not investing in our future and not forward thinking. Tourism is significantly important for the N.I economy and converting a luxury hotel into a nursing home is tone deaf and lacks foresight.
20. The hotel offers amenities for the local area and its change of use to a medical facility will have a negative impact on the neighbourhood. Living beside a 4-star hotel has more appeal than a nursing home.

	<p>21. Not all residents living on Summerhill Parade received planning consultation letters.</p> <p>22. Concerns raised over the location of bin storage. These can be an eyesore and come with the potential for overflowing waste and pests.</p> <p>23. Strongly oppose the demolition of perfectly good and affordable semidetached family homes. Almost all of these homes are occupied by families at present. Demolishing such homes only adds to an already existing housing crisis.</p> <p>24. The proposed demolition of number 39 Summerhill Road will impact the adjoining property at number 37 Summerhill Park, which is the other half of a pair of semi-detached dwellings.</p> <p>25. The intensity of a 24/7 care use and a diagnostic facility is materially different from hotel use and risks unacceptable harm to amenity through noise/disturbance, servicing activity and lighting.</p>
4.5	Points 1 and 3 are not material planning considerations. It should also be pointed out that there are no public communal areas proposed as part of this application.
4.6	In respect of point 15, this would fall under the remit of Environmental Health's own statutory nuisance provisions such as noise abatement.
4.7	Points 19, 20 and 24 relate to a separate planning application (ref. LA04/2024/0570/F) for a change of use of the hotel building. That application has been amended to remove the proposal to demolish No. 39 Summerhill Park.
4.8	Regarding point 21, the case officer cross-checked neighbours' addresses on site to ensure all neighbours that were eligible were notified.
4.9	All other points are material planning considerations and will be addressed below.
5.0	<p>PLANNING ASSESSMENT</p> <p>Development Plan Context</p>
5.1	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.
5.2	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.
5.3	<p>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 until the Local Policies Plan is adopted.</p> <p><u>Operational Policies</u></p>
5.4	The Plan Strategy contains a range of operational policies relevant to consideration of the application. These have been listed above at para 3.1.

	<p><u>Proposals Maps</u></p> <p>5.5 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.</p> <p>5.6 Belfast Urban Area Plan 2001 – the site is un-zoned “white-land” within the settlement limits for Belfast.</p> <p>5.7 Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan 2015 (v2004) – the site is un-zoned “white-land” within the settlement limits for Belfast and on an arterial route and a protected route.</p> <p>5.8 Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan 2015 (v2014) – the site is un-zoned “white-land” within the settlement limits for Belfast and on an arterial route and a protected route.</p> <p><u>Environmental Impact Assessment</u></p> <p>5.9 The proposed development falls within Category 10(b) of Schedule 2 of the Planning (Environment Impact Assessment) Regulations (NI) 2017 and therefore the Council is required under Regulation 12(1) to make a determination as to whether the proposal is EIA development. The Planning Service has determined that the proposal is unlikely to have any significant environmental effects in the context of the regulations and is not EIA development. Therefore, the application does not require to be accompanied by an Environmental Statement.</p> <p>Main Issues</p> <p>5.10 The main issues relevant to consideration of the application are set out below.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principle of development • Housing density • Affordable housing • Housing Mix • Adaptable and accessible accommodation • Design, Placemaking and Impact on Amenity • Transport • Healthy Communities • Built Heritage • Natural heritage • Climate change • Flood Risk and Drainage • Waste-water infrastructure • Environmental protection • Waste management • Section 76 planning agreement • Pre-application Community Consultation
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	Principle of development
5.11	<p>Policy HOU1 of the Plan Strategy sets out the housing requirements for the plan period. This includes a total of 18,100 homes within the 'rest of Belfast city' and 2,000 windfall homes. The proposal is located within a previously developed site (windfall) within 'rest of Belfast city'.</p>
	<p><i>Independent living units:</i></p>
5.12	<p>Policy HOU2 requires windfall housing to be delivered on previously developed land, such as the application site. Policy HOU2 goes onto require that such proposals also satisfy three criteria discussed below.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The site is suitable for housing – the site is in a sustainable location and considered suitable in principle for housing. • The location is accessible and convenient to public transport and walking cycle infrastructure – the site is on the Glider route and close to cycling / walking routes and is highly accessible to shops, services, amenities and public transport. • Provision is made for any additional infrastructure required as a result of the development – suitable infrastructure is in place to support the proposal.
5.13	<p>The proposed independent living units are compliant with Policies HOU1 and HOU2 and the principle of this form of housing in location is considered acceptable.</p>
	<p><i>Assisted living units:</i></p>
5.14	<p>The proposal includes up to 62 Class C3a assisted living units. The Planning (Use Classes) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015 defines Class 3a as: residential institutions '...for the provision of residential accommodation and care to people in need of care (other than a use within Class C1 (Dwellings)).' The proposed Section 76 planning agreement builds upon this definition, referring to "care" as personal care as defined in the Registered Homes (Northern Ireland) Order 1992(3) and also includes the personal care of children and medical care and treatment.</p>
5.15	<p>Policy HOU8 is applicable to proposals for assisted living accommodation. This policy states that permission will be granted for specialist residential accommodation subject to two criteria: a. a need is demonstrated via the submission of a statement of specialist housing need; and b. the proposal delivers convenient access to relevant local services and facilities, including local shops, public transport routes and health facilities.</p>
5.16	<p>The applicant has submitted a statement of housing need which demonstrates the need for assisted living accommodation in this area. The statement outlines how Northern Ireland is experiencing demographic shifts in terms of an ageing society and uses statistics from the NIHE to back this up. The Council's LDP Housing team has commented and this document and is supportive of the proposed assisted living accommodation. This satisfies criterion a. of Policy HOU8.</p>
5.17	<p>The application site is on an arterial route and in close proximity, shops, the Ulster hospital and Gilder and Metro bus links to Belfast City Centre, as well as outbound bus services to Newtownards, Comber, Holywood and Bangor. This is considered to comply with Criterion b. of Policy HOU8. More detail on travel is outlined under <i>Access and Transport</i>, below.</p>

5.18	<p>Policy HOU8 (Specialist residential accommodation) and Policy CI1 (Community Infrastructure) support the improvement of existing facilities subject to no unacceptable impact on residential amenity or natural/built heritage and satisfactory arrangements for / no impact on access, car parking, drainage and waste disposal. The proposal is considered acceptable in these respects for the reasons set out in detail later in the report. Therefore, there is in principle policy support for the provision of assisted living residential units here.</p> <p><i>Loss of existing housing stock:</i></p>
5.19	<p>Policy HOU3 seeks to protect existing residential accommodation. The proposal involves the demolition of fourteen existing dwellings. However, these would be expected to be replaced by a significant larger number of dwellings across the site. Policy HOU4 indicates a density band of 100-175 dwellings for this location; this 1.2 hectare (ha) site would therefore be expected to deliver 120 to 210 residential units. The density would be controlled at the reserved matters stage. It is considered that there would be no conflict with Policy HOU3.</p>
5.20	<p>The dwellings could not be demolished without the permission of the landowner/s and in this respect this is a land property issue.</p> <p>Housing density</p>
5.21	<p>Policy HOU4 seeks to promote appropriate housing densities to ensure effective use of land, a finite resource, in sustainable locations. The site is on the Upper Newtownards Road, a City Corridor. As stated above, the site would be expected to deliver between 120 to 210 residential units and overall numbers would be controlled at the reserved matters stage.</p> <p>Affordable housing</p>
5.22	<p>Policy HOU5 of the Plan Strategy requires housing schemes of 5 units or more, or sites of 0.1 hectares or greater, to deliver a minimum 20% affordable housing.</p> <p><i>Assisted Living Units:</i></p>
5.23	<p>HOU8 states that as specialist residential accommodation does not meet the needs of the general population, it is therefore exempt from affordable housing obligations. As such HOU5 is not applicable to the proposed up to 62no assisted living units. However, if planning permission were to be granted, the developer could benefit from permitted development rights to convert these units into Class C1 housing units once the permission has been implemented. Therefore, it is necessary to include a condition that removes such permitted development rights. This would mean that if there was a future proposal to use some or all of the assisting living units as standard housing (Class C1) then affordable housing would be expected to be provided under Policy HOU5.</p> <p><i>Independent Living Units:</i></p>
5.24	<p>The number of independent living units is to be determined at the reserved matters stage. Policy HOU5 requires at least 20% of the final number to be provided as affordable housing. This would be secured through a Section 76 planning agreement.</p>

	<p>Housing mix</p>
5.25	<p>Policy HOU6 states that planning permission will be granted for new residential developments on sites greater than 0.1ha and/or containing 5 or more dwelling units where the proposed development provides a suitable mix of house types and sizes to promote choice and assist in meeting community needs. Provision should particularly be made for smaller homes across all tenures to meet future household requirements.</p>
5.26	<p>The detailed design and housing mix of the scheme will be determined at reserved matters stage, having regard to Policy HOU6.</p>
	<p>Adaptable and accessible accommodation</p>
5.27	<p>Policy HOU7 requires that all new homes should be designed in a flexible way to ensure that housing is adaptable throughout all stages of life. Policy HOU7 sets six criteria (a. to f.) to be met in order to help deliver adaptable and accessible homes. The policy also requires that at least 10% of units in residential developments, of 10 units or more, to be wheelchair accessible and provides an additional nine criteria (g. to o.) which these units must meet. This would also be considered at reserved matters stage if outline permission is granted. A condition is recommended that requirements the development to incorporate adaptable and accessible design and layout features.</p>
	<p>Design, Placemaking and Impact on Amenity</p>
	<p><i>Proposed form, scale, massing and design:</i></p>
5.28	<p>As this is for outline permission, the number of units, layout and design of the proposal are reserved for subsequent approval. Therefore, there are no such details currently before the Council to assess. The proposal was originally submitted with parameter plans to illustrate indicative heights and locations of the proposed apartment blocks. However, these have been withdrawn to allow for greater flexible design approach at reserved matters stage.</p>
5.29	<p>The demolition of the fourteen existing dwellings, particularly the dwellings situated along the frontage of the east side of Castleview Road, would impact on the character of the area. As such, careful consideration will be needed at reserved matters stage to ensure that the replacement development would safeguard the character of this street and the surrounding area. A condition is recommended to ensure that a contract is in place for the redevelopment prior to demolition to avoid the dwellings being demolished and not being replaced.</p>
5.30	<p>The form, scale, massing and design will be assessed against the relevant design policies at the reserved matter stage. It is considered that the site can in principle accommodate the type of uses proposed in keeping with the site and surroundings.</p> <p><i>Topography and levels:</i></p>
5.31	<p>The site is relatively flat with exception of the front (north) of the site which rises up to meet road level. It is unlikely that there will be a requirement for retaining walls and any level changes can be addressed by design at reserved matters stage.</p> <p><i>Landscaping including planting and boundary treatments:</i></p>
5.32	<p>Landscaping is reserved for subsequent approval.</p>

5.33	<p>The Council's Landscape Planning and Development team has requested, where feasible, the retention of all existing vegetation within the red line application site, in addition to requested that the following information is provided as part of the reserved matters application/s:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detailed landscape proposals, showing hard landscaping, site furniture, entrance/boundary treatments and planting works, including specifications and schedules; and • A Landscape Management Plan, including design objectives, management responsibilities and maintenance schedules for all landscape works.
5.34	<p>The detailed landscaping proposals will be considered at the reserved matters stage.</p>
5.35	<p>Management of the open space and common parts of the site is to be secured through a Section 76 planning agreement.</p>
	<p>Transport</p>
	<p><i>Access:</i></p>
5.36	<p>The Upper Newtownards Road is a protected route and as such Policy TRAN 7 and the SPPS are applicable for proposals that may result in the intensification of existing accesses onto a Protected Route. Regard is had to the existing intensive use of the Upper Newtownards Road by the current hotel. DfI Roads has confirmed that they are content that the proposed level of traffic onto the Upper Newtownards Road from the proposal is reasonable.</p>
5.37	<p>The detailed access arrangements are reserved. The applicant's Design and Access statement suggests that the access to the development will be facilitated by the existing vehicular access off the Upper Newtownards Road and a revised access of Castlevue Road. The existing access off Summerhill Parade is indicated to be permanently closed.</p>
5.38	<p>DfI Roads has been consulted and is content with the proposed arrangements.</p>
	<p><i>Parking:</i></p>
5.40	<p>The layout and parking arrangements are reserved for subsequent approval.</p>
	<p><i>Travel Plan:</i></p>
5.41	<p>The applicant has provided a Travel Plan that demonstrates that the proposed development is accessible to staff, residents and visitors by alternative and sustainable modes of transport. The site is a highly accessible location within the city having direct access to the road network and public transport. The Upper Newtownards Road is serviced by the Glider. The supporting Travel Plan also identifies several cycle routes linking the site to the wider cycle path network.</p>
5.42	<p>The proposed Class C1 independent residential units would benefit from a Travel Fund based on £1,927 per unit. Residents would be able to spend their allowance on green travel measures such as purchasing Travel Cards; car club membership and bicycle vouchers, to promote modal shift away from car use. The Travel Plan and Travel Fund would be secured by a Section 76 planning agreement.</p>

5.43	<p>DfI Roads offers no objection to the proposal subject to conditions. The proposal is considered acceptable having regard to Policies TRAN1, TRAN2, TRAN4, TRAN6 and TRAN8.</p> <p>Healthy Communities</p>
5.44	<p>The proposal is considered to comply with Policy HC1 with opportunities to promote healthy communities through active travel and good placemaking.</p> <p>Built Heritage</p>
5.45	<p>The site is located in close proximity to several listing buildings, including the Gate Lodge, Gates and Screens, Stormont Estate, Parliament Buildings, walls and lamp standards, Lord Carson Memorial Statue, Stormont Estate. St. Molua's Church of Ireland Church, 645 Upper Newtownards Road.</p>
5.46	<p>HED has assessed the proposal, advising that it considers the proposed development of the site is appropriate under policy and is satisfied with the principle of development, having regard to potential impact on the setting of nearby listed buildings. HED adds that it will require further information at reserved matters stage, including a Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) and indicative contextual elevations.</p>
5.47	<p>It is considered that the site is capable of accommodating the proposed development whilst safeguarding the setting of nearby Listed Buildings. This would be ensured at the reserved matters stage.</p>
5.48	<p>HED has not raised any issues with regard to archaeology.</p>
5.49	<p>The proposal is considered in compliance with Policies BH1 and BH5 and relevant provision of the SPPS.</p> <p>Natural heritage</p>
5.50	<p>DAERA NIEA and Shared Environmental Services (SES) have considered the impacts of the proposal on designated sites and other natural heritage interests. On the basis of the information provided, they have no objection subject to conditions. These conditions are recommended.</p>
5.51	<p>It is considered that the proposal is in compliance with Policy NH1 and relevant provisions of the SPPS.</p> <p>Climate change</p>
5.52	<p>Policy ENV2 and Policy ENV3 state that planning permission will be granted for development that incorporates, where feasible, measures to mitigate and adapt to environmental change and reduce greenhouse gases by promoting sustainable patterns of development. Policy ENV5 requires that new built development should include, where appropriate, SuDS measures to manage surface water effectively on site.</p>
5.53	<p>A condition is recommended that requires climate change measures to be incorporated into the design and layout of the proposal at reserved matters stage.</p>
5.54	<p>Subject to this condition, it is considered that the proposal complies with Policies ENV2, ENV3, ENV5 and relevant provisions of the SPPS.</p>

	<p>Flood Risk and Drainage</p>
5.55	<p>Flood Maps (NI) indicates that the site lies outside the 1 in a 100 year climate change fluvial or 1 in 200 year climate change coastal flood plain. As such a Flood Risk Assessment is not required. A Drainage Assessment has been submitted and DfI Rivers upon consultation has advised that they have no reason to disagree with its conclusions. The proposal is considered compliant with Policy ENV4 and relevant provisions of the SPPS.</p>
	<p>Waste-water infrastructure</p>
5.56	<p>NI Water has advised that there is a public foul sewer within 20m of the proposed development boundary and that the proposed development can be adequately serviced in terms of waste-water infrastructure. NI Water offers no objection. The proposal is considered in compliance with Policy SP1a which requires that necessary infrastructure is in place to support new development.</p>
	<p>Environmental protection</p>
5.57	<p>Policy ENV1 states that planning permission will be granted for development that will maintain and, where possible, enhance environmental quality, and protects communities from materially harmful development.</p>
5.58	<p>The proposal has been assessed by Environmental Health in terms of noise, air pollution, general amenity, ambient air quality, contaminated land, and other considerations including light pollution. Environmental Health has confirmed that it has no objections, subject to conditions. These conditions are recommended.</p>
5.59	<p>It is considered that the proposal is in compliance with Policy ENV1 and relevant provisions of the SPPS.</p>
	<p>Waste Management</p>
5.60	<p>The location of bin storage and arrangements for collection of bins are to be considered at reserved matters stage. A waste management plan should be secured as part of the outline planning permission.</p>
	<p>Section 76 planning agreement</p>
5.61	<p>If the application is approved, it should be subject to the finalisation of a Section 76 planning agreement to secure the following planning obligations. These are considered necessary to make the proposed development acceptable:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Balance of uses – to ensure an appropriate mix of assisted and independent living units, no less than 25% and no more than 75% of the final number of Residential Units shall be occupied as Class C1 independent housing units. Similarly, no less than 25% and no more than 75% of the final number of Residential Units shall be occupied as Class C3A assisted living units. • Affordable housing – minimum of 20% of the Class C1 independent housing units to be delivered as affordable housing. Details of the tenure and mix of the affordable housing to be submitted to the Council for approval on or before the submission of application/s for approval of the reserved matters. • Travel Plan – implementation of the Travel Plan and Travel Fund.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employability and Skills – the Council’s Economic Development Unit has advised that a Construction Employability and Skills Plan is required to promote inclusive growth, consistent with the Developer Contribution Framework. • Management of the open space – requirement for the owner to manage any public open space and common parts of the site in accordance with a management plan to be submitted to and agreed by the Council. • Link to planning application LA04/2024/0570/F – upon commencement of development, the hotel shall no longer be permitted to be used as a hotel or any other use within Class C2.
5.62	<p>Legal Services has confirmed that the Section 76 planning agreement has been agreed in principle.</p> <p><u>Pre-application Community Consultation</u></p>
5.63	<p>The application was preceded by a statutory Proposal of Application Notice (PAN) which set out the applicant’s proposals for pre-application community consultation.</p>
5.64	<p>The application is accompanied by a mandatory Pre-application Community Consultation Report (PACC). The PACC report describes the comprehensive pre-application consultation undertaken by the applicant.</p>
5.65	<p>The applicant states that they actively sought the views of the public and stakeholders by utilising the following methods of engagement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The applicant published a notice in the press on 11 August 2022, seven days prior to holding a public event on 18 August 2022 (3pm to 7pm) at the Stormont Hotel. • Distribution of information leaflets with free-post feedback form and free consultation phone-line to 1,100 properties within 500m of the proposed site. • A dedicated website was set up and launched on 10 August 2022 which included all details and documents of the project submitted with the PAN and outlined all the consultation methods available including comments through the website. The website was live from 10th August until 1 September 2022. • A “Live Chat” function was made available on the project website and was operational between 9am and 5pm, Monday-Friday. • Printed physical packs containing proposal information were available on request to be posted out. Two hard copy packs were distributed via post on request, 26 digital packs were emailed to residents. • The PAN was provided to a list of community interests in the area via email on 17 June 2022. • All elected members within the Electoral Area had received a copy of the PAN on 17 June 2022. • In addition, the PAN was also issued to other elected representatives including Ormiston DEA Councillors, East Belfast MLAs, the East Belfast MP.
5.66	<p>The PACC report states that the majority of feedback to the public consultation was either supportive, neutral or negative. A few specific issues were raised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The need to improve on-site parking and reduce the amount of on-street car parking. • The hotel is an asset to the local community and should not be closed. • Too many old people in the area already.

<p>5.67</p> <p>5.68</p>	<p>In response to the feedback, the proposal was modified as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A transport consultant was instructed to ensure that the proposal provides suitable safe access for pedestrians, cycles and cars. The proposal will encourage the use of the nearby public transport network to reduce car-dependency, and demand for parking. • Commercial matters relating to the hotel are not within the remit of the applicant. The current outline proposal by Summerhill Retirement Developments seeks to establish if the principle of redevelopment on the site is acceptable. • This proposal will additionally seek to support intergenerational communities in the area and ensuring that residents of all ages can continue to live in the area. <p>It is considered that the Pre-Community Consultation Report submitted has demonstrated that the applicant has carried out their duty under Section 27 of the Planning Act (NI) 2011 to consult the community in advance of submitting an application.</p>
<p>6.0</p> <p>6.1</p> <p>6.2</p>	<p>Recommendation</p> <p>Having regard to the Development Plan and material considerations, it is recommended that planning permission is granted subject to conditions.</p> <p>Delegated authority is sought for the Director of Planning and Building Control to finalise the wording of the conditions and Section 76 planning agreement, and deal with and any other issues that arise, provided the issues are not substantive.</p>
<p>7.0</p>	<p>DRAFT CONDITIONS</p> <p>1. The development hereby permitted must be begun by the following, whichever is the later.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Five years from the date of this permission; or</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">The expiration of two years from the date of approval of the last of the reserved matters</p> <p>Reason: As required by Section 62 of the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011.</p> <p>2. Application/s for approval of the reserved matters shall be made to the Council within three years from the date of this permission.</p> <p>Reason: As required by Section 62 of the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011.</p> <p>3. No development shall commence on site unless details of the siting, design, external appearance, means of access and landscaping (herein called "the reserved matters") have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Council.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">The development shall not be carried out unless in accordance with the approved details.</p> <p>Reserved matters: To identify which matter(s) are reserved for subsequent approval.</p>

4. The reserved matters referred to in condition 3 shall include:

Siting – the two-dimensional location of buildings within the site;

Design – the two-dimensional internal arrangement of building/s and the floor space devoted to such uses, the three-dimensional form of the buildings including height, massing, number of storeys and general external appearance;

External appearance of the buildings – the architectural appearance and materials including the colour, texture and type of facing materials to be used for external walls and roofs;

Means of Access – the location and two-dimensional design of any vehicular and pedestrian accesses to the site from the surrounding area and also access circulation, car parking, facilities for the loading and unloading of vehicles and access to individual buildings within the site; and

Landscaping – treatment of the remaining parts of the site not covered by buildings including both soft and hard landscaping where proposed. Where applicable, including the laying out of gardens and the provision of amenity space. Soft landscaping to include planting such as trees, hedges, shrubs and grassed areas. Hard landscaping to include laying of hard surface areas, the formation of banks, terraces or other earthworks and erection of walls, fencing and other built means of enclosure.

Reason: This permission is in outline only and further details of the development are required under section 4(1) of The Planning (General Development Procedure) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015.

5. Application/s for reserved matters shall specify the proposed housing mix.

Reason: To ensure an appropriate housing mix, having regard to Policy HOU6 of the Belfast Local Development Plan: Plan Strategy 2035.

6. Application/s for reserved matters shall include measures to mitigate and adapt to climate change and Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS).

Reason: To address climate change, having regard to Policies ENV2, ENV3 and ENV5 of the Belfast Local Development Plan: Plan Strategy 2035.

7. There shall be no more than 62no. assisted living units (Class C3(a) of the Planning (Use Classes) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015).

Reason: The applicant has demonstrated a need of no more than 62 assisted living units, having regard to Policy HOU8 of the Belfast Local Development Plan: Plan Strategy 2035.

8. Notwithstanding the provisions of the Planning (General Permitted Development) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015 (or any order revoking and/or re-enacting that order with or without modification), the Class 3(a) units hereby approved shall not be used other than for that purpose and for no other use within Class 3 or other Class without express planning permission.

Reason: Alternative use requires further consideration by the Council, having regard to the Local Development Plan and relevant material considerations.

9. None of the fourteen existing dwellings hereby permitted to be demolished shall be demolished unless a contract has been let to redevelop the lands on which the dwellings are located in accordance with a valid planning permission, details of which shall have first been submitted to and approved in writing by the Council.

Reason: To ensure appropriate redevelopment of the site in the interests of the character and appearance of the area and to safeguard against the loss of existing housing stock without a replacement.

10. No development shall be commenced unless a Remediation Strategy has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Council. The Remediation Strategy shall consider the RPS Ireland Ltd report entitled 'Project Carson – Stormont Hotel, Generic Quantitative Risk Assessment Report, RWM-01491, Project Carson, Stormont Hotel, GQRA, Rev 04, February 2025'. The Remediation Strategy shall follow Environment Agency and CIRIA guidance and British Standards and must demonstrate how the identified contaminant linkages are to be demonstrably broken and no longer pose a potential risk to human health. It must also detail how the proposed remedial works are to be verified. The development shall not be carried out unless in accordance with the approved Remediation Strategy.

Reason: To ensure that any contamination within the site is appropriately dealt with, in the interests of human health.

11. No part of the development shall be occupied unless a Verification Report has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Council. The Verification Report shall be completed by competent persons and be in accordance with Environment Agency and CIRIA guidance and British Standards. It must demonstrate that the mitigation measures outlined in the agreed Remediation Strategy have been implemented, that they have broken the relevant contaminant linkages and that the site no longer poses a potential risk to human health.

Reason: To demonstrate that the required remedial measures have been incorporated into the development, in the interests of human health.

12. If during the carrying out of the development, new contamination is encountered that has not previously been identified, all related works shall cease immediately, and the Council shall be notified immediately in writing. No further development shall proceed until this new contamination has been fully investigated in accordance with current industry recognised best practice. In the event of unacceptable human health risks being identified, a Remediation Strategy and subsequent Verification Report shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Council, prior to the development being occupied or operated. The Verification Report shall be completed by competent persons in accordance with best practice and must demonstrate that the remediation measures have been implemented and that the site is now fit for end-use.

Reason: To ensure that any contamination within the site is appropriately dealt with, in the interests of human health.

13. In the event that any centralised combustion sources (generators, boilers, CHP or biomass) are proposed as part of this development and there is a risk of impact at relevant receptor locations as per the criteria detailed within the Environmental Protection UK and Institute of Air Quality Management, Land-use Planning & Development Control: Planning For Air Quality (January 2017), an updated Air Quality Impact Assessment shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Council prior to the installation of the plant. The assessment shall include details of the combustion plant to be installed, to include emission rates and flue termination heights of the proposed combustion systems and it must demonstrate that there will be no exceedances of Air Quality Strategy objectives at relevant human receptor locations. No centralised combustion sources (generators, boilers, CHP or biomass) shall be installed unless in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: In the interests of air quality.

14. If during the development works, new contamination or risks are encountered which have not previously been identified, works shall cease and the Council shall be notified immediately in writing. This new contamination shall be fully investigated in accordance with the Land Contamination: Risk Management (LCRM) guidance available at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/land-contamination-how-to-manage-the-risks> In the event of unacceptable risks being identified, a Remediation Strategy shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Council prior to works re-commencing.

Reason: Protection of environmental receptors to ensure the site is suitable for use.

15. After completing any remediation works under condition 14, and prior to operation of the development, a verification report shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Council. This report should be completed by competent persons in accordance with the Land Contamination: Risk Management (LCRM) guidance available at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/land-contamination-how-to-manage-the-risks> The verification report should present all the remediation, waste management and monitoring works undertaken and demonstrate the effectiveness of the works in managing all the risks and wastes in achieving the remedial objectives.

Reason: Protection of environmental receptors to ensure the site is suitable for use.

16. The development shall not be occupied or operated unless a Final Waste Management Plan has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Council. The development shall not be operated unless in accordance with the approved Final Waste Management Plan.

Reason: To ensure adequate provision of refuse and recycling storage in the interests of the amenities of the area.

DRAFT INFORMATIVES

Section 76 planning agreement

1. This planning permission is subject to a planning agreement under Section 76 of the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011. This decision should be read in conjunction with the planning agreement, which secures the balance of uses; affordable housing; construction employability and skills plan; management of the open space; and prevents continued use of the hotel on commencement of development.
2. Please make sure that you carry out the development in accordance with the approved plans and any planning conditions listed above. Failure to do so will mean that the proposal is unauthorised and liable for investigation by the Council's Planning Enforcement team. If you would like advice about how to comply with the planning permission, you are advised to contact the Planning Service at Belfast City Council at planning@belfastcity.gov.uk.
3. This planning permission includes conditions which require further details to be submitted to and approved by the Council. Please read the conditions carefully so that you know when this information needs to be provided and approved. It could take a minimum of 8 weeks for the Council to approve the details, assuming that they are satisfactory, and sometimes longer depending on the complexity of the condition. You should allow for this when planning the timeline of your project.

	<p>4. The grant of planning permission does not dispense with the need to obtain licenses, authorisations may have been identified by consultees in their response to the application and can be accessed on the Northern Ireland Planning Portal website. The responses from consultees may also include other general advice for the benefit of the applicant or developer. consents or permissions under other legislation or protocols.</p>
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