

Public Document Pack

**Democratic Services Section
Chief Executive's Department
Belfast City Council
City Hall
Belfast
BT1 5GS**

19th February, 2015

MEETING OF SHADOW PLANNING COMMITTEE

Dear Councillor,

The above-named Committee will meet in the Lavery Room - City Hall on Thursday, 19th February, 2015 at 6.30 pm, for the transaction of the business noted below.

You are requested to attend.

Yours faithfully

Suzanne Wylie
Chief Executive

AGENDA:

1. Routine Matters
 - (a) Apologies
 - (b) Minutes
 - (c) Declarations of Interest
2. Routine Correspondence (Pages 1 - 18)
3. Readiness for day one (Pages 19 - 32)
4. Establishment of Shared Environmental Service (Pages 33 - 36)
5. Planning Scheme of Delegation and Operating Protocol (Pages 37 - 56)

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Routine Correspondence


In accordance with its decision on 22nd January, 2015, the Committee's comments are sought in respect of the undernoted proposed delisting of buildings in Belfast, copies of which are attached:

“In addition, the Committee agreed to defer, to enable further information to be provided, consideration of the proposals in respect of the following buildings:

- ***Arthur Chambers, 4 to 14 Arthur Street;***
- ***4 to 8 Church Lane (incorporating Miss Moran tobacconist) ;***
- ***10 Church Lane; and***
- ***Former Methodist Church facade, Donegall Square East.***

It was noted that the consultation exercise regarding the matter would close at the end of February and, accordingly, the Committee agreed that the issue be reconsidered at its meeting scheduled for 19th of that month, at which it would give its considered response to the proposals.”

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Address Arthur Chambers 4-14 Arthur Street Belfast County Antrim BT1 4GD	HB Ref No	HB26/50/178
Extent of Listing Not listed		
Date of Construction 1900 - 1919		
Townland Town Parks		
Current Building Use Shop		
Principal Former Use Office		

Conservation Area	Yes	Survey 1	B2	OS Map No	130/13 SE
Industrial Archaeology	No	NIEA Evaluation	Delist	IG Ref	J3399 7420
Vernacular	No	Date of Listing	30/11/1988	IHR No	
Thatched	No	Date of Delisting		SMR No	
Monument	No			HGI Ref	
Area of Townscape Character	No				
Local Landscape Policy Area	No				
Historic Gardens Inventory	No				
Vacant	Partially				
Derelict	No				

Owner Category

Building Information

Exterior Description and Setting

A four storey H-shaped commercial building on the east side of Arthur Street, built c.1905.

Pitched, natural slate roof with modern rooflights behind solid parapet. The parapet is stone coped with volutes framing central segmental gable with a panel of brown stucco lettering "ARTHUR CHAMBERS". Rainwater pipes are square metal to front, uPVC to rear. Walls are mainly brick, Flemish bond and raised strings, with pebble dash rendered panels to upper floors; all window openings have exaggerated, tall keystones of red sandstone and moulded stone cills. The third floor windows are round arches, except for central pair which have segmental arched heads; the second floor windows are segmental arches; the first floor windows are segmental arches except for central window which has a round arch.

The windows are timber casements with overlights. The door to 6 Arthur St. is original 4 panelled with a single pane overlight with gold lettering; the door to 10 is a replacement 3 panelled with two overlights. The shop fronts are modern.

The main west elevation is symmetrical around the central gable; 9 windows wide to first and second floors; the windows on the third floor are doubled in the brick panels and are two in the central gabled section, giving 12 windows. The doors are positioned between the shops under the second and sixth windows.

The north elevation is abutted by a four storey building HB26/50/096.

The rear east elevation is obscured at ground level by the extended shops. The upper floors have two extended wings. The window openings are generally flat arched 3 pane 1/1 and 2/1 timber sash windows, with some first and second floor openings with segmental arches.

The south elevation is abutted by a five storey building HB26/50/100.

Setting:

4-14 Arthur St. Sits directly on the pavement of the pedestrian street. Abutting to the north is HB26/50/096 and to the south is HB26/50/100 creating a continuous terrace of red brick buildings.

Schedule:

Roof:	Natural slate.
Walls:	Brick and render.
Windows:	Timber casements and sashes.
RWG:	Metal and uPVC.

Interior Overview

Interior layout partially changed. Detailing substantially altered.

Architects

Not Known

Historical Information

Nos 4-14 Arthur Street, a four-storey redbrick office building with retail units at ground level, was constructed in c. 1906 following the demolition of a number of two and three-storey properties on the site; the Annual Revisions and a photograph from the turn of the 20th century (Patton, p. 16) record that the east side of Arthur Street consisted of a variety of dwellings, shops and warerooms, all of which were leased by Lt Col Edward May. The Belfast Street Directories note that the previous buildings, along nos 4-14 Arthur Street, included a piano warehouse, a land agency and auctioneers office and the premises of W. B. Todd, a shellfish merchant (Belfast Street Directory – 1901).

It is not known with certainty who designed Arthur Chambers; however the Irish Builder records that in 1902 the commercial architects, Young & Mackenzie, submitted a tender for the erection of a block of shops and offices along Arthur Street (Irish Builder, pp 1452-1472; Dictionary of Irish Architects). Arthur Chambers was first included in the Annual Revisions in 1906, suggesting that the office block was completed by that year. When originally completed, Arthur Chambers consisted of four ground floor retail premises with office space located in the three upper-storeys. In 1906 the ground floor units were occupied by Hugh Renton & Co. (accountants and auctioneers), Scott & Evans Ltd. (piano and musical instrument merchants), A. Bell & Sons Ltd (a laundrette), and J. Alfred McAuley (a land and estate agent). In the same year the upper floors of Alfred Chambers were utilised as office space for solicitors firms, estate agents and a wholesale merchant association to name a few (Belfast Street Directory – 1907). Upon its completion the Annual Revisions set the total rateable value of Arthur Chambers at £755 10s.

Over the following half-century the occupants of Arthur Chambers changed with some frequency, however some of the original tenants continued to operate from the site until well into the mid-20th century (and in the case of J. Alfred McAuley and A. Bell & Sons, as late as the 1970s). By 1918 two of

the ground floor retail units had been occupied by William Dickson's Umbrella and Stick shop, whilst another was used as a dress shop operated by a Ms. Reid; the upper floors continued to be occupied by the same variety of solicitors, estate agents and merchants (Belfast Street Directory -1918). By the cancellation of the Annual Revisions in 1930 the total value of Arthur Chambers had been increased to £862 10s.

Almost thirty years after its completion, in 1935, the value of Arthur Chambers was greatly increased to £1,525 under the First General Revaluation of property in Northern Ireland. There was no further revaluation of the site carried out for over two decades due to the disruption caused by the Second World War. During the war the whiskey and spirit merchants Dunville & Co., who had their headquarters opposite at nos 25-39 Arthur Street (see HB26/50/171), held offices in Arthur Chambers (Belfast Street Directory – 1943). In the aftermath of the conflict Arthur Chambers was included in the second general revaluation (1956-72); by the revaluations end in 1972, two of the ground floor retail units continued to be occupied by the original 1906 tenants, A. Bell & Sons and J. Alfred McAuley, whilst the other units were utilised by a domestic cleaning business and the Ormeau Bakery. By the end of the second revaluation in 1972 the total value of Arthur Chambers stood at £2,424.

Arthur Street (and by extension Arthur Chambers) was named after one of the Earls of Donegall (many of whom were given the name) and during the early 19th century the street was known for its fine residences, however during the general commercial redevelopment of Belfast's city centre in the Victorian period, the street took on its current character. Domestic dwellings were replaced by retail shops and office buildings; Patton states that prior to the erection of Arthur Chambers, the eastern side of Arthur Street was a varied mix of 'three-storey buildings of varying heights [the style of which consisted of a] haphazard collection of classical details thrown together in a vernacular manner, the shopfronts jostling for space like a mouth with too many teeth. Arthur Chambers, like the adjoining State Buildings (see HB26/50/100) was constructed in the Edwardian period and is an interesting example of the aesthetic experimentation employed during the period.

Arthur Chambers was listed in 1988; writing in 1993, Patton described the Edwardian structure as a 'four-storey office building in red brick with red sandstone details and panels of pebbledash. Ground floor cornice and entablature complete, with deep-plinched pilasters of dark grey polished granite and free capitals incorporating masks and Ionic horns; exaggeratedly tall keystones to upper level windows, which are set in brickwork and every sixth course set slightly forward; central bay rises to shallow segmental-topped gable with name Arthur Chambers in stone' (Patton, p. 20). The ground floor units of Arthur Chambers continue to be occupied by a number of retail shops; however, field inspection finds that the upper office floors currently lie vacant and in varying states of repair.

References

Primary Sources

1. PRONI OS/6/1/61/3 – Third Edition Ordnance Survey Map 1901-02
2. PRONI OS/6/1/61/4 – Fourth Edition Ordnance Survey Map 1931
3. PRONI OS/6/1/61/5 – Fifth Edition Ordnance Survey Map 1938
4. PRONI VAL/12/B/43/C/17-45 – Annual Revisions 1897-1930
5. PRONI VAL/3/B/3/13 – First General Revaluation of Northern Ireland 1935
6. PRONI VAL/4/B/7/38 – Second General Revaluation of Northern Ireland 1956-72
7. Irish Builder, Vol. 44 (23 Oct, 6 Nov 1902)
8. Belfast Street Directories (1901-1943)
9. First Survey Image – HB26/50/178 (1988)

Secondary Sources

1. Patton, M., 'Central Belfast: An historical gazetteer' Belfast: Ulster Architectural Heritage Society, 1993.
2. Pollock, V; Parkhill, T., 'Britain in old photographs: Belfast' Gloucestershire, Sutton Publishing Ltd, 1997.

Online Resources

1. Dictionary of Irish Architects - <http://www.dia.ie>

Criteria for Listing

Architectural Interest

Not listed

Historical Interest

Not listed

Evaluation

A four storey commercial brick and render building built c1905. Although of some interest as a modest example of Edwardian architecture, it is of a late date and has been compromised by alterations resulting in the loss of much historic fabric and detailing. It is not among the best of the type and there are other, better examples listed.

Replacements and Alterations

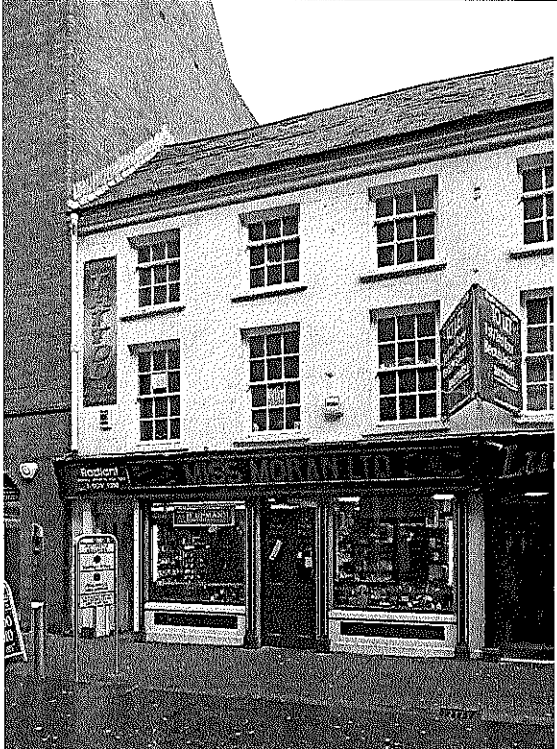
None

If inappropriate, Why?

General Comments

Monitoring Notes – since Date of Survey

Date of Survey 11/02/2013

Address 4-8 Church Lane Belfast Co Antrim BT1 4QN	HB Ref No HB26/50/042 A
Extent of Listing Building only	
Date of Construction 1780 - 1799	
Townland Town Parks	
Current Building Use Shop	
Principal Former Use House	

Conservation Area	Yes	Survey 1	B1	OS Map No	130/13NE
Industrial Archaeology	No	NIEA Evaluation	Delist	IG Ref	J3413 7443
Vernacular	No	Date of Listing	15/04/1988	IHR No	
Thatched	No	Date of Delisting		SMR No	
Monument	No			HGI Ref	
Area of Townscape Character	No				
Local Landscape Policy Area	No				
Historic Gardens Inventory	No				
Vacant	No				
Derelict	No				

Owner Category Private

Building Information

Exterior Description and Setting

A three-storey five-bay rendered terraced building in late Georgian style with shopped ground floor facing Church Lane.

Pitched slate roof with blue clay ridge tiles; no chimneys. Ruled and lined rendered walling. Upper floors

have 6/6 d/h timber sash windows (three windows over nos.4-6 and two above no.8) with projecting cills. Ground floor shopfront incorporates separate door at no.4 (modern flush door behind roller shutter) leading to the first floor over the shop at no.6.

Principal west elevation comprises double-fronted shop with plate glass windows over rendered stall risers with slender fluted pilasters on bases. Door and window of similar design to no.8. Shop sign on canted glass fascia with gold lettering at no.6.

Rear elevation rendered without windows and includes a small lean-to extension bringing the building out to the stone rubble wall of St George's Church (HB26/50/045).

Setting: Although now obscured by rendering, Church Lane contains a number of similar related late Georgian structures which back onto St George's churchyard, indicating the densely-packed nature of the city at that time.

Walls: Rendered
Windows: Timber
Roof: natural slate
RWG: Cast iron.

Interior Overview

Interior layout largely unchanged; detailing largely intact.

Architects

Not Known

Historical Information

Buildings are shown on the site on a map of Belfast dating from 1715 and it is possible that the present shops retain some early fabric. However, the appearance of the buildings is consistent with a Georgian/Victorian urban vernacular of uncertain date. Patton dates the current terrace to c1780 on the grounds that Church Lane had been redeveloped by 1788 with leases requiring frontages of up to fifteen feet in height.

In 1800 one of the principal inns of Belfast, the White Hart stood in Church Lane and the street was known for its shoemakers, the celebrated painter Andrew Nicholl being the son of a Church Lane bootmaker who lived at number six. (Patton) Nicholl painted many views of Belfast and Ulster and a large collection of his work is held by the Ulster Museum. (www.ulsterhistorycircle.co.uk)

Individual houses in Church Lane are not identifiable in the Townland Valuation (1828-40) because the associated town plan is missing. However the buildings are listed in Street Directories from the early nineteenth century and in Griffith's Valuation (1856-64). No occupants are recorded in the 1901 and 1911 censuses, suggesting that by this stage the shopkeepers resided elsewhere.

Numbers four and six Church Lane were initially two separate premises and the first occupant to be listed in street directories in 1806 was Andrew Nicholl, boot and shoemaker and father of the celebrated painter, at number 6. An 1843 directory lists Ann Johnston, bonnet maker at number four, while 'Cumine' saddle and harness manufacturer, occupied number six. By 1852 the terrace was entirely occupied by boot and shoe makers with John Mortimer at number 4 and Thomas Palmer at number 6. Griffith's Valuation (1856-64) lists Samuel Moore, boot maker at number 4 and Thomas Palmer at number 6. The shops were leased from Edward Coey and a rent was paid of £14 a year for number 4 and £12 a year for number 6. The two buildings were divided in an unusual fashion, in that each shop rented a ground floor and number four rented in addition the first floor over numbers 4 and 6 while number 6 rented the second floor over both shops. Number 4 was valued at £11 and number 6 at £10.

In 1877 John Freeman rope and twine manufacturer was at number four and William McLarnon tobacconist at number six. In 1879 the two shops with dwellings over were combined into one and revalued at £26, the premises of William McLarnon tobacconist. The valuation of number 4/6 was

increased to £40 c1900 in common with other buildings in the terrace indicating that remodelling or improvements took place at this time. By 1935 the shop had been taken over by Miss Moran, tobacconist who had formerly held the premises at number 10.

The shopfronts were replaced in traditional style c1985 and in 1993 Patton remarked that the 'splendidly cosy treasure house of an interior to Miss Moran Ltd is largely untouched with display case windows, mirrored shelves of cigar boxes, mahogany counter, old posters advertising archaic tobaccos and a sheeted low ceiling'. The interior of the shop remains largely traditional to the present day.

Number eight Church Lane is noted in early street directories as the premises of boot and shoemakers. In 1819 it was occupied by George Taylor boot and shoemaker, then Alexander Faulkner (shoe shop 1843) and William Mortimer boot and shoe maker (1852). Griffith's Valuation of 1856-64 lists the occupier as James Mortimer, shoe maker who paid a rent of £18. The valuation was £15 but this was increased to £25 c1900 indicating that remodelling or improvements took place at this time. Boot and shoe makers remained at the property until 1901 when it was taken over by R A Brown watch maker and jeweller. In the 1990s the shop was renamed 'Accessories' and presently operates as a sandwich bar.

Primary Sources

1. PRONI OS/6/1/61/1 – First Edition OS Map 1832-3
2. PRONI OS/6/1/61/3 – Third Edition OS Map 1858
3. PRONI OS/6/1/61/4 – Fourth Edition OS Map 1901-2
4. PRONI OS/6/1/61/6 – Sixth Edition OS Map 1931
5. PRONI VAL/2/B/7/4A Griffith's Valuation (1856-64)
6. PRONI VAL/12/B/43/C/1-31 Annual Revisions (1863-1905)
7. PRONI VAL/12/B/43/D/1-22 Annual Revisions (1862-1930)
8. Street Directories 1839-1995
9. 1901 census online
10. 1911 census online

Secondary Sources

1. Patton, M "Central Belfast: An Historical Gazetteer" Belfast: Ulster Architectural Heritage Society, 1993
2. www.ulsterhistorycircle.co.uk

Criteria for Listing

Architectural Interest

Not listed

Historical Interest

Not listed

Evaluation

A three-storey rendered terraced building in late Georgian style. Although some historic fabric survives, the whole has been compromised by restoration and renewal. Of interest is the tobacconist's shop on the ground floor, which has good detailing (all modern replacement c1985) and an association with the site since 1935. This small group (HB26/50/042A&B) is of some interest as the remnant of the Georgian street, the remainder of which has been lost. However, as virtual replicas, they no longer meet the statutory and policy tests as buildings of special architectural or historic interest.

Replacements and Alterations

Appropriate

If inappropriate, Why?

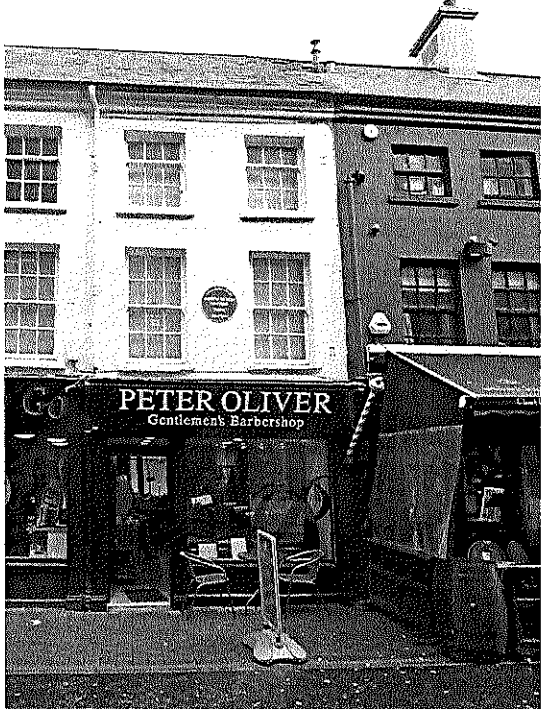
General Comments

Monitoring Notes – since Date of Survey

Date of Survey 18/11/2012

**Second Survey Database
District Council Consultation Report**

HB26/50/042 B

<p>Address 10 Church Lane Belfast Co Antrim BT1 4QN</p>	<p>HB Ref No HB26/50/042 B</p> 
<p>Extent of Listing Building Only</p>	
<p>Date of Construction 1780 - 1799</p>	
<p>Townland Town Parks</p>	
<p>Current Building Use Shop</p>	
<p>Principal Former Use House</p>	

Conservation Area	Yes	Survey 1	B2	OS Map No	130/13NE
Industrial Archaeology	No	NIEA Evaluation	Delist	IG Ref	J3413 7443
Vernacular	No	Date of Listing	22/11/1989	IHR No	
Thatched	No	Date of Delisting		SMR No	
Monument	No			HGI Ref	
Area of Townscape Character	No				
Local Landscape Policy Area	No				
Historic Gardens Inventory	No				
Vacant	No				
Derelict	No				

Owner Category Private

Building Information

Exterior Description and Setting

Three-storey two-bay rendered mid-terraced building in late Georgian style with shopped ground floor facing Church Lane.

Slate roof with blue clay ridge tiles; no chimneys. Ruled and lined rendered walling. Upper floors have

6/6 d/h timber sash windows with projecting cills.

Principal west elevation comprises single-fronted shop with plate glass window over rendered stall riser with slender fluted pilasters on bases. Door and window of similar design to nos.6-8 (HB26/50/042A). Modern barber's pole to one side. Ulster Historical Foundation 'Blue Plaque' affixed, commemorating Andrew Nicholl, painter.

Rear elevation rendered without windows and includes a small lean-to extension bringing the building out to the stone rubble wall of St George's Church (HB26/50/045).

Setting: Although now obscured by rendering, Church Lane contains a number of similar related late Georgian structures and nos.4-8 (HB26/50/042A) which back onto St George's churchyard (HB26/50/045), indicating the densely-packed nature of the city at that time.

Walls: Rendered
Windows: Timber
Roof: natural slate
RWG: Cast iron.

Interior Overview

Interior layout completely changed; detailing substantially altered.

Architects

Not Known

Historical Information

Buildings are shown on the site on a map of Belfast dating from 1715 and it is possible that the present shops retain some early fabric. However, the appearance of the buildings is consistent with a Georgian/Victorian urban vernacular of uncertain date. Patton dates the current terrace to c1780 on the grounds that Church Lane had been redeveloped by 1788 with leases requiring frontages of up to fifteen feet in height.

In 1800 one of the principal inns of Belfast, the White Hart stood in Church Lane and the street was known for its shoemakers, the celebrated painter Andrew Nicholl being the son of a Church Lane bootmaker. (Patton) Individual houses in Church Lane are not identifiable in the Townland Valuation (1828-40) because the associated town plan is missing. However the buildings are listed in Street Directories from the early nineteenth century and in Griffith's Valuation (1856-64). No occupants are recorded in the 1901 and 1911 censuses, suggesting that by this stage the shopkeepers resided elsewhere.

A street directory of 1808 lists Martins & Parks, merchants at number ten Church Lane, followed by Anne Browne (1819) and George Brodie, watch glass manufacturer (1843). By the time of Griffith's Valuation (1856-64) the occupier was Robert Brown, boot maker, and the valuation was £14. James Carnduff ran a shoe shop here in 1868. The valuation of number ten was increased to £25 c1900 in common with other buildings in the terrace indicating that remodelling or improvements took place at this time. The shop became a tobacconists from 1901 run first by C Kirk and then by Miss Moran, who later moved to number 4/6. In subsequent years the shop changed hands frequently: W F Platt Raynewear (1935), A Faith gold buyers (1945), W T Pyper chemist (1950), S Gray leather goods and shoe repairs (1965), Thos McCleary & Son, Estate Agents and Valuers (1975), Audio Fare (1980) and Audiometrics (1990).

The shopfronts were replaced in traditional style c1985 and the current premises is now run as a barber shop.

Primary Sources

1. PRONI OS/6/1/61/1 – First Edition OS Map 1832-3
2. PRONI OS/6/1/61/3 – Third Edition OS Map 1858

**Second Survey Database
District Council Consultation Report**

HB26/50/042 B

3. PRONI OS/6/1/61/4 – Fourth Edition OS Map 1901-2
4. PRONI OS/6/1/61/6 – Sixth Edition OS Map 1931
5. PRONI VAL/2/B/7/4A Griffith's Valuation (1856-64)
6. PRONI VAL/12/B/43/C/1-31 Annual Revisions (1863-1905)
7. PRONI VAL/12/B/43/D/1-22 Annual Revisions (1862-1930)
8. Street Directories 1808-1995
9. 1901 census online
10. 1911 census online

Secondary Sources

1. Patton, M "Central Belfast: An Historical Gazetteer" Belfast: Ulster Architectural Heritage Society, 1993
2. www.ulsterhistorycircle.co.uk

Criteria for Listing

Architectural Interest

- A. Style
- B. Proportion
- J. Setting
- K. Group value

Historical Interest

- X. Local Interest

Evaluation

A three-storey rendered mid-terraced building dating from c.1780. Although some historic fabric survives, representing a late Georgian urban vernacular, the whole has been compromised by restoration and renewal. This small group (HB26/50/042A&B) is of some interest as the remnant of the Georgian street, the remainder of which has been lost. However, as virtual replicas, they no longer meet the statutory and policy tests as buildings of special architectural or historic interest.

Replacements and Alterations

Inappropriate

If inappropriate, Why?


Modern shopfront and interior.

General Comments

Monitoring Notes – since Date of Survey

Date of Survey 18/10/2012

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Address Ulster Bank (Former Methodist Church) 11-16 Donegall Square East Belfast BT1 5UB County Antrim	HB Ref No HB26/50/019	
Extent of Listing Not listed		
Date of Construction 1840 - 1859		
Townland Town Parks		
Current Building Use Bank		
Principal Former Use Church		

Conservation Area	Yes	Survey 1	B+	OS Map No	130-13SE
Industrial Archaeology	No	NIEA Evaluation	Delist	IG Ref	J3394 7403
Vernacular	No	Date of Listing	03/06/1975	IHR No	
Thatched	No	Date of Delisting		SMR No	
Monument	No			HGI Ref	
Area of Townscape Character	No				
Local Landscape Policy Area	No				
Historic Gardens Inventory	No				
Vacant	No				
Derelict	No				

Owner Category

Building Information

Exterior Description and Setting

Attached symmetrical pedimented two-storey stucco-fronted Neo-Classical former Methodist Church, built c.1846, to the designs of Isaac Farrell with prostyle hexastyle portico. Largely demolished c.1990 with the pedimented facade incorporated into a modern office development, completed c.1999.

Lead-lined roof to pediment with a single cast-iron hopper and downpipe to the north wing. Painted stuccoed walling. Square and round-headed window openings with replacement powder-coated steel-framed windows. Original double-leaf varnished doors with raised-and-fielded panels and matching rectangular overpanels to the left and right cheeks of the central arch, replacement glass doors to

remainder.

Prostyle hexastyle portico comprises a full-span modillioned pediment, plain tympanum and plain architrave supported by six Giant order Corinthian columns having responding Corinthian pilasters to the facade resting on raised pedestals fronting onto the pavement. Painted stuccoed walling, channel rusticated to the ground floor with a guilloche platband at first floor sill level. Square-headed window openings to the first floor with architrave surrounds and cornice supported on console brackets. Round-headed window openings to both end bays on the ground floor having decorative steel windows with margin lights. Groin-vaulted transverse porch to the three central arches with a double-height glazed entrance porch to the centre and possibly original double-leaf timber panelled doors to the cheeks. Square-headed door opening to the north wing with architrave surround and pediment supported on console brackets having double-leaf timber doors with raised-and-fielded panels. Replacement granite paving within portico and entire facade enclosed by decorative cast-iron railings with matching iron piers and gates.

Setting

Located on the east side of Donegall Square overlooking Belfast City Hall (HB26/50/001A) abutted to all sides by modern office developments.

Roof; Lead-covered pediment
Walling: Stucco
Windows: steel
RWG: Cast-iron

Interior Overview

N/A

Architects

Farrell, Francis

Historical Information

Donegall Square Methodist Church was built to the designs of Isaac Farrell in 1846-50, replacing an earlier Methodist meeting house c1806.

The new 'Wesleyan Methodist Chapel' is first listed in Griffith's Valuation (1859-60) at a value of £200. Fronting Donegall Square East and captioned 'Methodist Chapel' on a map of Belfast (1864), this building replaced a smaller 'Methodist Chapel', which was previously located on site but was set back from the street-line of Donegall Square East (map c1818).

Built in 1806, this original meeting house was valued at £44 in the Townland Valuation (1830s) and comprised a simple square-plan building, capable of seating 800 people (Walker). This meeting house was in itself a replacement for the very first Methodist church, founded in nearby Fountain Street in 1787 (Patton).

As the congregation of Donegall Square grew, a larger church, to be built on the same site, was deemed necessary. Alderman William McConnell, who had aided construction of the church by means of a grant of £1,500, laid the foundation stone on 2nd July 1846 and the church opened in June 1847 (Walker). Designs were prepared by the Dublin architect, Isaac Farrell, who completed a number of Methodist churches in Dublin and Coleraine, in this "...very solid classical form." (Walker). A rare and valuable 18th century Snetzler organ was bought from Armagh Cathedral in 1849 but on 2nd September of that year, the church interior was destroyed by fire. The building was completely rebuilt, except for the portico façade, by the original contractor James Carlisle, in 1850 (Patton; DIA).

The square plan church, sited behind the grand frontage, was capable of seating 1,500 while the basement below was used for Sunday school, accommodating a maximum of 1,000 children (Patton). The church was six bays in length, with two aisles separating the box pews. A large gallery embraced

three sides of the interior while the pulpit and wall-mounted organ pipes dominated the fourth wall (Walker). Originally low wings connected the main portico to the buildings on either side, one of which still remains. Renovation work and the addition of a new organ, was undertaken by Hogg & Sons in 1910 and overseen by architect James St John Phillips (DIA).

The church was closed in the early 1990s and was completely demolished with the exception of the façade (Walker; Patton). Significant redevelopment occurred during the first decade of the 21st century; the steps to the main entrance were removed and the façade now acts as a frontage piece to a large modern office development to the rear, which houses the headquarters of the Ulster Bank (HB File).

The building represents the last example of a classically designed church, to be constructed in Belfast and the solid and restrained classical frontage piece acts as "...an essential component of the (Donegall) square's streetscape." (Patton).

References:

Primary Sources

1. PRONI OS/6/1/61/2- Second Edition OS Map (1832-33)
2. PRONI OS/6/1/61/3- Third Edition OS Map (1858)
3. PRONI OS/6/1/61/4- Fourth Edition OS Map (1901-2)
4. PRONI OS/6/1/61/6- Sixth Edition OS Map (1931)
5. PRONI T1541/1 – Map of Belfast Reduced from the 60' Survey and updated (1864)
6. PRONI T1541/5- Map of Belfast (1818)

7. PRONI VAL/1/B/720- Townland Valuations (1830s)
8. PRONI VAL/2/B/7/1A- Griffith's Valuation (1859-60)
9. PRONI VAL/12/B/43/A1- Annual Revisions (1862-82)
10. PRONI VAL/12/B/43/C35- Annual Revisions (1906-15)
11. PRONI VAL/3/B/3/14- First General Revaluation (1935)

12. The Ulster Street Directories (1841-1995)
13. HB File (HB26/50/019)

Secondary Sources

1. Walker, Simon "Historic Ulster Churches" QUB, Belfast (2000)
2. Curl, James, Stevens "Classical Churches in Ulster" UAHS, Belfast (1980)
3. Larmour, P "Belfast, An Illustrated Architectural Guide" 1987
4. Brett, C.E.B " The Buildings of Belfast 1700-1914" 1985 ed
5. Patton, Marcus "Central Belfast- An Historical Gazetteer" UAHS, Belfast (1993)
6. www.dia.ie - Dictionary of Irish Architects online

Criteria for Listing

Architectural Interest

Not listed

Historical Interest

Not listed

Evaluation

Attached symmetrical pedimented two-storey stucco-fronted Neo-Classical former Methodist Church built c1846 with prostyle hexastyle portico. Largely demolished c.1990 with the pedimented facade incorporated into a modern office development, completed c.1999. An impressive temple front is all that remains of this former church, which stands as a decorative element on the square. While the history of the site is of note, the present structure is no longer a building of special architectural or historic interest.

Replacements and Alterations

Inappropriate

If inappropriate, Why?

Demolition of a listed building in a Conservation Area.

General Comments

Monitoring Notes – since Date of Survey

Date of Survey 18/08/2012



Belfast City Council (Shadow)

Report to:	Shadow Planning Committee
Subject:	Readiness for day 1 - Planning
Date:	19 th February 2015
Reporting	John McGrillen, Director of Development, Ext. 3509
Contact officer:	Eve Bremner, Programme Manager, Ext. 3275

1.0	Relevant background information
1.1	On 1 st April 2015 a range of planning functions will transfer from DOE to the Council. The Council and its Members, will assume responsibility for making decisions on the majority of planning applications and will also agree a local development plan outlining its ambitions for how land is used and developed - effectively replacing BMAP.
1.2	To support the transfer of planning, a programme team of DOE and Belfast City Council is co-ordinating delivery of a detailed project plan. The SRO for this 'project' is John McGrillen and a project board (the 'Planning Panel') has been established to ensure input from across relevant Council departments.
1.3	Following discussion at the Audit Panel in January, the programme team were asked to provide a report on the level of readiness to deliver planning from 1 st April.

2.0	Key issues
2.1	The transfer of planning is largely seen in two phases - transition and transformation. Given the complexity of the transfer the priority to date has been on transition and ensuring the Council can discharge its statutory duties and deliver <u>business critical planning functions</u> from 1 st April, 2015.
2.2	Readiness therefore will be judged by our ability to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Receive and process new, or live, applications for planning permission, TPO requests and enforcement case; <i>and</i> • Support the work of the new Planning Committee.
2.3	Appendix 1 outlines a series of key deliverables that must be in place in order for this to happen and provides an assessment of readiness (indicated by a RAG status). This has been informed by a series of workshops with TMT and officers where end-to-end processes were scrutinised in detail and emerging gaps/issues incorporated into the project plan.

2.4	The assessment at this time indicates that the majority of tasks are either completed or on target for completion and as such it is judged that the Council is well placed to deliver planning from 1 st April, 2015.
2.5	Nevertheless, it is also recognised that the Council is dependent on a number of third parties in respect of key areas. These include: a) The re-configuration of the NI Planning Portal by DOE; b) Agreement of a regional MOU with NI Direct and integration with their telephony system; c) Drafting and agreement of regional SLAs for shared services by DOE d) Transfer of, or access to, DOE archive and digital data; e) Drafting and agreement of regional SLAs with statutory
2.6	The programme team will, therefore, continue to liaise with these parties and escalate issues as they are known. A second readiness workshop will also be held with operational officers from across the Council and DOE using scenario based assessment. The findings from which will be fed back to the Planning Panel and TMT.

3.0	Resource Implications
3.1	There are no cost implications associated with this report.

4.0	Equality and Good Relations Considerations
4.1	There are no equality or good relations implications identified at present.

5.0	Call In
5.1	N/A

6.0	Recommendations
6.1	Members are asked to note the report.

7.0	Decision Tracking
7.1	Members should note that the Director of Development will ensure that any decisions in relation to the programme of work will be brought before the appropriate committee.

8.0	Abbreviations
	DOE – Department of Environment

9.0	Documents Attached
	Appendix 1 - Readiness Assurance report

**READINESS DAY 1 - PLANNING
ASSURANCE REPORT
10th FEBRUARY 2015**

1. Introduction

On 1st April 2015 a range of planning functions will transfer from DOE to the council. The council, and its members, will assume responsibility for making decisions on the majority of planning applications and will also agree a local development plan outlining its ambitions for how land is used and developed - effectively replacing BMAP.

To support the transfer of planning, a programme team of DOE and BCC officers is coordinating delivery of a detailed project plan. The SRO for this 'project' is John McGrillen and a project board (the 'Planning Panel') has been established to ensure input from across relevant council departments.

2. Monitoring Progress

To date, progress against the project plan has been monitored and scrutinised in a number of ways including:

- i. **Progress and status updates** - updates on progress against the detailed project plan and the project issues log have been provided on an ongoing basis (in a range of formats) to Committee, Planning Panel, Infrastructure Group and TMT.
- ii. **AGRS** - AGRS currently conduct a monthly review and feedback to the SRO, Audit Panel and Assurance Board.
- iii. **Operational readiness workshops** - a detailed workshop was held in January to review end-to-end business processes and identify any 'gaps' or emerging issues. A further workshop will be held in March to ensure these have been resolved.
- iv. **Health check** - a 'health check' of the project took place in January and findings were fed back to TMT.
- v. **TMT assurance workshop** - a workshop has been held with TMT to scrutinise the detailed project plan and run through business critical processes (end-to-end). This workshop focussed on seeking assurance that key interface points with corporate services had been resolved and that sufficient controls were in place.

Following discussion at the Audit Panel in January the programme team were also asked to provide a report on the level of readiness to deliver planning from 1st April. The attached table therefore provides a summary report with an assessment of readiness (indicated by a RAG status).

3. Definition of 'readiness'

Before undertaking this assessment, however, it is important that there is an understanding of what constitutes 'readiness'.

The transfer of planning is largely seen in two phases - transition and transformation. Given the complexity of the transfer the priority to date has been on transition and ensuring the Council can discharge its statutory duties and deliver **business critical planning functions** from 1st April 2015 i.e. the ability to:

- receive and process new, or live, applications for planning permission, TPO requests and enforcement case; *and*
- support the work of the new Planning Committee.

This will require the following to be in place:

1. New business processes where guidance or legislation has brought about changes; or indeed as a result of interface with Council systems.
2. New corporate governance arrangements and those required specifically for the Planning committee e.g. Scheme of Delegation & Committee Protocol.
3. A newly established planning committee and confirmed membership
4. Capacity building for elected members and staff.
5. An agreed financial settlement with central government and supporting revenue estimates
6. An agreed complement of staff transferred from DOE to Council.
7. Confirmed organisational design arrangements for the new Planning team within Belfast City Council
8. Planning staff transferred to BCC office space and the required Portal and telephony connectivity
9. The building of public reception area for planning and staffing in place to cover agreed opening hours.
10. Contracts, SLAs or MOUs to ensure ongoing supply of services
11. SLAs/MOUs to ensure access to shared services.
12. SLAs with statutory consultees.
13. The transfer of, or access to, relevant data.
14. Back-office systems required for operational delivery e.g. clockwise, payroll arrangements and document management.
15. Effective internal and external communications.
16. Suitable controls and business continuity arrangements.
17. A performance management framework that informs business improvement as well as the reporting requirements of the DOE.

Table 1, therefore, provides a summary of the current state of readiness and is judged against these key deliverables.

4. Conclusions

The summary below indicates that the majority of tasks are on target and as such it is judged that the Council is well placed to deliver planning from 1st April 2015.

Workshops with TMT and officers have though identified a number of areas that the programme team have subsequently incorporated mitigating actions into their project plan and /or issues log. These include ensuring adequate controls measures are in place and the need for detailed work on how the work of the committee is supported.

Finally, it should also be recognised that the Council is dependent on a number of third parties in respect of key areas.

These include:

- a. The re-configuration of the NI Planning Portal by DOE;
- b. Agreement of a regional MOU with NI Direct and integration with their telephony system;
- c. Drafting and agreement of regional SLAs for shared services by DOE;
- d. Transfer of, or access to, DOE archive and digital data;
- e. Drafting and agreement of regional SLAs with statutory.

The project team will though continue to liaise with these parties on an ongoing basis and will undertake to escalate issues as they are known.

5. Next steps

A number of steps are suggested:

- a) The project team will continue to provide regular reports to the Planning Panel (weekly), TMT and committee on progress and issues; and in particular those areas highlighted through the TMT workshop;
- b) AGRS should continue to offer advice and support and provide feedback to the Audit Panel and Assurance Board;
- c) A readiness workshop should be held with operational officers from across BCC and DOE - using scenario based assessment. The findings from which should be fed back to the Planning Panel and TMT.

Table 1 - Assessment of readiness

WORKSTREAM/ ACTIVITY	READINESS STATUS	COMMENT	Lead officers
Code of conduct	Complete	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Code for members in place from DOE and training has taken place <p>ACTION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Code of conduct for staff to be revised to take account of planners 	John Walsh
Scheme of Delegation	Complete <i>(subject to committee approval)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Political consultation took place in December and a subsequent final draft will be brought to Shadow Planning on 19.2.14. 	John Walsh/ Kelly Mills (DOE)
Subordinate legislation	On target for completion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Phase 1 at Environment Committee stage Phase 2 Consultations closed - DoE confident it will progress through to Legislation 	Keith Sutherland
Committee TOR	Complete <i>(subject to committee approval)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paper going to SSP&R on 13.2.15, Shadow Plg on 19.2.14 in respect of this. 	John Walsh
Committee Protocol	Complete <i>(subject to committee approval)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft guidance from DOE circulated to members and local Belfast protocol drafted by Legal Services. Also to be taken to Planning on 19.2.15. Process maps in place and system for generating committee papers from Portal also agreed. Revised case officer report templates provided by DOE w/beg 2.2.15 for comment. <p>ACTION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comments on DOE draft report templates to be submitted by officers New report format to be used in March capacity building sessions 	Eve Bremner/ Nora Largey
Committee Models	Complete	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Models agreed by SSP&R <p>ACTION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Membership of planning committee TBC ASAP to allow capacity building to take place. 	Emer Husbands/ Stephen McCrory

Complaints & EIRs	On target for completion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing EIR process in place and Planning will adopt BCC complaints process. <p><u>ACTION</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capacity building for staff in new complaints process 	Neil Dunlop
Staff Transfer - HR	On target for completion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Names of 44 staff transferring have now been confirmed though may be subject to change through promotion Boards. <p><u>ACTION</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> OD structure to be confirmed. Skills analysis to be completed for transferring staff and layered with OD proposals. Subsequent capacity building to reflect these longer term models. 	Karen Russell/ Helen Devlin
Staff Transfer - Finance payroll & Travel	On target for completion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Currently building payroll and clockwise systems based on analysis of Terms and Conditions. <p><u>ACTION</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Car parking arrangements/spaces TBC 	Trevor Wallace/ Karen Russell/ Cathy Reynolds
Accommodation	On target for completion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Office area confirmed and floor plans confirmed in Cecil Ward - 4th floor and ground floor. Work began w/beg 9.2.15. Delivery Services will undertake decant scheduled for 27-30 March Filing to be moved from 21/3/15 into new archive area in Cecil Ward Cecil Ward reception will be open from 1st April (9.30-4.30 each day) 	George Wright/ Gerry McFall
Development Management	On target for completion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Detailed end-to-end business process maps are in place and workshop held with key officers to confirm roles and responsibilities (and identify any gaps/risks). Testing of the updated Portal system taking place in February (coordinated by DOE); though as BCC is not the administrator of the system we will have no input to change requests/control. Public reception arrangements in Cecil Ward confirmed and additional credit card payment method being introduced. 	Ian Harper/ Ciara Reville (DOE)

		<p><u>ACTION</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Audit of detailed process to take place - Controls to be mapped and agreed - Business continuity plan to be finalised. - Belfast user input to DOE Portal testing schedule to be arranged by C.McIlwaine - Proposal papers on Community Consultation guidelines to be tabled 	
Advertising	Complete	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • End-to-end process mapped and timelines agreed. • Resource included as part of regional settlement, though efficiencies will be have to be found in the longer term. • Advertisements to be posted on BCC website as well as papers from April 15 onwards. <p><u>ACTION</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Policy paper on potential efficiencies in advertising costs to be brought to TMT with input from Legal Services on mitigating risk. 	Ian Harper/ Karalyn Smith
Spot Listing/Heritage Powers	On target for completion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • End-to-end process mapped and timelines agreed. <p><u>ACTION</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Confirm contact within NIEA 	Neil Dunlop
TPOs	On target for completion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • End-to-end process mapped and timelines agreed. <p><u>ACTION</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use of existing contract for surveying and arboriculture work to be confirmed - Development of skills base within local office required 	Ian Harper/ Alan McHaffie
JRs/Appeals	On target for completion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DOE has confirmed that JRs launched pre-1st April will remain with the Department <p><u>ACTION</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A meeting is required with legal and planning staff to explore the support required in respect of Appeals 	John Walsh
Enforcement	Complete (subject to committee approval)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy paper on changes introduced by legislation is in draft form and currently being considered by our Legal Services. • Staffing structure includes small resource to support continued level of reactive enforcement. <p><u>ACTION</u></p>	Ian Harper/ Kelly Mills (DOE)

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Paper to be tabled at TMT and committee outlining new legislation and integration of planning with our corporate enforcement policy. 	
Local Development Plan	Postponed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Day 1 readiness has been prioritised therefore work on the LDP has been postponed. • Initial work has though taken place with the Community Planning team to identify potential synergies and also to explore good practice in other jurisdictions. 	Keith Sutherland
Regional and Shared/ Specialist Services	On target for completion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft SLAs in place but still to be agreed. <p>ACTION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Confirmation of protocol for charging and access to service to be agreed. – Allocation of income in relation to Property Certificates to be escalated at CX's group. 	Keith Sutherland
Presentation at committee	On target for completion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detailed Committee Protocol in draft and being brought to Committee on 19.2.15. • Detailed process map in place following TMT session; with clear timeframes and roles and responsibilities articulated • ‘Mock’ committee agenda and papers being prepared to test processes. • Pre-committee drop-in sessions to be scheduled for members to assist decision making on night. • Early Group scheduled to prepare for April Committee and to accommodate disruption of staff decant and Easter break. • Demo of committee room held on 28.1.15 and recommendation paper provided to TMT. • Proposed AV equipment currently on order. • Arrangements for deputations by objectors is included within the committee protocol <p>ACTION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Interim OD arrangements to be confirmed in order to finalise process flow in respect of committee papers and roles of planning officers in presenting to committee. – Capacity building with confirmed committee members to take place 	Eve Bremner/ Stephen McCrory/ Kelly Mills (DOE)

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Digital Services to confirm new display equipment will be available for capacity building sessions in March. - Confirm content of acknowledgement letters to objectors generated by Portal to determine whether additional information should accompany this 	
Post committee process	Complete	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • End-to-end process mapped and timelines agreed. • Decisions to be published on BCC website within 2 working days of committee and target for decision notices is to be issued within 2 weeks 	Eve Bremner/ Stephen McCrory/ Kelly Mills (DOE)
Data Transfer - off site material	Behind schedule	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant volumes of files are stored off site through existing DoE contract with iron Mountain. • DOE have indicated that they will be unable to complete the required disaggregation of files for the new Council clusters by 1st April. • BCC contract for off site storage in place. <p><u>ACTION</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - DOE to provide outline of proposed interim access arrangements until disaggregation can take place. - DOE to confirm if they will meet cost for transfer of files (after 1st April). 	Keith Sutherland
Data Transfer - digital	On target for completion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirmed majority of data within Portal or being transferred on shared drive by disk - <p><u>ACTION</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - TRIM and other data still to be resolved 	Keith Sutherland
GIS	On target for completion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initial testing completed - longer term functionality to be confirmed 	Keith Sutherland
Telephony	On target for completion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BCC has confirmed it intends to continue to use NI Direct. • There is an integration issue in relation to accessing the Lagan CRM system as this is currently available via Network NI. • However, DFP have advised they will ensure that connectivity is established for April 1st - Digital Service to liaise with NI Direct. <p>Director of Digital Services (DFP) has confirmed that NI Direct will be made available to those that wish to use it.</p>	Paul Gribben/ Ian Harper

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft MOU has been distributed to CXs for comment. <p><u>ACTION</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Integration to be confirmed and tested – MOU to be agreed. 	
Portal	Complete	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connectivity to Portal from BCC network established 	Paul Gribben
Procurement/ Contracts	On target for completion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key contracts identified and are largely accommodated for in existing BCC contracts or through SLAs currently being developed at a regional level. • Dialogue with local planning officers has highlighted some additional contracts and this has caused some concern that there may be others; however it is understood that those they are required for business continuity are in place. • Confirmation of contracts has therefore been requested from DOE but not yet provided <p><u>ACTION</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Continue to escalate with DOE 	Valerie Cupples
Performance	On target for completion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statutory KPIs confirmed Operational PIs to be agreed and also interface with corporate reporting schedule & system <p><u>ACTION</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Draft paper to be brought to TMT/Committee. 	Joanne Delaney/ Keith Sutherland
Controls	On target for completion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A series of controls have been identified through process mapping - including user access to Portal and financial controls <p><u>ACTION</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – A full run through of processes will take place with AGRS and planning staff to review current controls and identify any gaps. 	Ian Harper/ Clifford McIlwaine
Finance - Accounting	On target for completion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finance & resources are currently exploring whether the current DOE process can be integrated into SAP. • Detailed process mapping of current processes has through taken place and support is being provided by the CX's Business Support team for the new planning function. 	Trevor Wallace

Estimates	Complete	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning estimates completed and final allocation from DOE communicated. 	Sean McCarthy
Capacity Building Members	On target for completion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detailed programme of events and training is being provided to members for the Shadow Planning Committee and all other members. <p><u>ACTION</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Capacity Building for confirmed Chair and members of Planning Committee to be arranged in advance of 1st committee meeting. 	Lisa Rogan/ Neil Dunlop
Capacity Building - Development Industry	On target for completion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Event taking place on 16.2.15. • Over 100 registered to attend. • Pre-and post event publicity through social media 	Lisa Rogan/ Neil Dunlop
Capacity Building - Officers (BCC)	Behind schedule	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skills audit to commence subject to OD structure 	Lisa Rogan
Capacity Building - Officers (DoE)	Behind schedule	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has been delayed primarily due to late confirmation of names of those transferring. • Confirmation of OD structure is also required and this is similarly limited with our new Director in place. • Inductions and training in key areas (e.g. managing in a political environment) are taking place in February and March. <p><u>ACTION</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – OD structure to be confirmed. 	Lisa Rogan/ Clifford McIlwaine
Comms & Eng - Public	Ongoing (complete to date)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Website content for BCC agreed and will go live on 1st April. • Home page to be reconfigured to provide high profile 'tab' for planning • Bounce page to Portal on BCC page and vice versa on DOE page. • Regional advertising campaign to begin in March re: TOF • Articles have been included in City Matters since autumn and March edition will confirm contact details and opening hours of new office. <p>Joint DOE press event on 31st March with Minister and Lord Mayor scheduled to take place.</p>	Natasha Tully/ Eve Bremner

		<u>ACTION</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Ongoing communications plan for post April to be agreed.- Notification letter to applicants of changes to be finalised and to be circulated from March onwards	
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Belfast City Council (Shadow)

Report to:	Shadow Planning Committee
Subject:	Establishment of Shared Environmental Service
Date:	19 th February 2015
Reporting	John McGrillen, Director of Development
Contact officer:	Keith Sutherland, Urban Development Manager, ext. 3578

1.0	Relevant background information
1.1	On 1 st April 2015 a range of planning functions will transfer from Department of the Environment (DoE) to the council. The more specialised functions in relation to environmental services were to be considered on the basis of a shared services approach due in part to the difficulty in maintaining service provision whilst disaggregating the functions across 11 council clusters.
1.2	On transfer of the suite of local planning functions to local government the 11 councils will have responsibility for: Habitats Regulations Assessments (HRA) on planning applications; HRA for the preparation of Local Development Plans; and the consideration of the implications from development on European Sites (e.g. Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas).
1.3	The Shared Environmental Service (SES) model for was agreed by the Regional Transition Operational Board to be a suitable model to support local councils in carrying out these functions. The Mid & East Antrim Council offered to host the Service, on behalf of councils, subject to further consideration of service objectives and functions alongside the potential resourcing.

2.0	Key issues
2.1	The Mid and East Antrim Council has now confirmed that it is willing to host the Shared Environmental Service for local councils and has provided details of the proposed objectives and functions of the service (see Appendix 1). It is proposed that the specialist SES team will provide expert advice and support to all the new councils from a base in County Hall Ballymena.
2.2	The primary role of the SES team will be to carry out Habitats Regulations Assessments on planning applications and during the preparation of Local Development Plans to assess and advise on impacts on European Sites (e.g. Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas). This function is essential to ensure that legal requirements in respect of these Habitats / Sites are fully met and to reduce the risk of

	challenge to planning decisions, development plans and policies.
2.3	The DoE have confirmed that the full costs for delivery of the Service will be transferred to Mid & East Antrim Council. This means that there will be no ongoing cost to Belfast City Council in relation to the use of the shared services outlined in the appended letter.
2.5	In order to progress the preparations for the delivery of this service Mid & East Antrim Council are seeking agreement in principle that Belfast City Council will utilise the Service. The final agreement would be subject to the preparation of a Service Level Agreement to formalise the terms of delivery and governance arrangements for the service.
2.6	I would seek the agreement of your Council, in principle, to this Shared Service Model. I would ask you identify a Liaison Officer from your Planning Service to work on a draft Service Level Agreement which will be presented to your Council in the next number of weeks.
2.7	As highlighted in the appended letter this is an important function in ensuring that risks are reduced whilst the legal requirements associated with planning decisions, development plans and policies are fully met. It is therefore suggested that the Committee agrees to support, in principle, this Shared Service proposal This agreement would be subject to the preparation of a Service Level Agreement that sets out the required delivery and governance arrangements for the service.

3.0	Resource Implications
3.1	There are no cost implications associated with this report.

4.0	Equality and Good Relations Considerations
4.1	There are no equality or good relations implications identified at present.

5.0	Call In
5.1	N/A

6.0	Recommendations
6.1	It is recommended that the Committee supports, in principle, the Shared Service proposal detailed in Appendix 1 subject to the preparation and agreement of a Service Level Agreement with Mid & East Antrim Council.

7.0	Decision Tracking
7.1	A further readiness report will be brought in March.

8.0	Documents Attached
	Appendix 1 - Readiness Assurance report

9.0	Abbreviations
	HRA - Habitats Regulations Assessments SES - Shared Environmental Service

Mid and East Antrim District Council

Ref: TC/ab

Date: 10 February 2015



THE BRAID
BALLYMENA TOWN HALL,
MUSEUM & ARTS CENTRE

1 – 29 Bridge
Street
Ballymena
Co Antrim
BT43 5EJ

Dear Chief Executives

Re: Establishment of Shared Environmental Service

I am writing to confirm that Mid and East Antrim Council agreed in January to host the Shared Environmental Service for local government. In order to support planning for the delivery of this service it would be helpful if you could confirm, in principle, if your Council will utilise the Service. I have included further details of the objectives and functions of the service below and I am happy to clarify any other queries which you may have. Preparation of a Service Level Agreement between Mid and East Antrim and the other Councils is underway to formalise the terms of delivery and governance arrangements for the service.

Background

The Shared Environmental Service model was agreed by the Regional Transition Operational Board to be a suitable model to support local Councils to meet their legal obligations relating to their enhanced environmental responsibilities arising from the transfer of planning responsibilities to local government. Mid and East Antrim offered to host the Service, subject to the approval of its Council, which has now been granted.

Overview of the Shared Environmental Service (SES)

The SES, which will be based in County Hall Ballymena, will comprise eight specialist staff to provide expert advice and support to Councils. Its primary role will be to carry out Habitats Regulations Assessments on planning applications and during the preparation of Local Development Plans to assess and advise on impacts on European Sites (e.g. Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas). This function is essential to ensure that legal requirements are fully met and to reduce the risk of challenge to planning decisions, development plans and policies. The full costs for delivery of the Service will be transferred to Mid and East Antrim Council from DOE and DFP; therefore there will be no costs to Councils to utilise the service.

The Head of Service, Susanna Allen, is in place and selection of the remaining staff from the NI Environment Agency is close to completion. The Service will be fully staffed, trained and ready to commence delivery on 1 April. Work is ongoing with planners to detail the process of service delivery. An overview of the objectives and functions of the Service follows.

Objectives of the Shared Environmental Service

1. Support Councils to comply with Environmental Legislation in relation to European sites in carrying out their Development Management functions.
2. Support Councils to comply with Environmental Legislation in relation to European sites throughout the preparation of Local Development Plans.
3. Minimise the extent of challenge on Development Management determinations and Local Development Plans in relation to impacts on European sites.
4. Support Councils by presenting expert evidence about impacts on European sites in relation to development planning.
5. Provide advice in a timescale that supports planning decisions to be made within statutory requirements and performance targets.

Functions

The Shared Environmental Service will:

- A. advise planning staff on implementation of the Habitats Regulations Assessments (HRA) in respect of Development Management and will confirm any survey requirements for HRAs.
- B. carry out Appropriate Assessments (stage 2 of HRA) on behalf of Councils for all planning applications for which they are required.
- C. assess and advise Councils on potential impacts of planning applications on Areas of Special Scientific Interest (ASSI) for those European Sites which are also ASSIs.
- D. advise Councils on European Site considerations for Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA) to include the adequacy of data to inform impacts on European Sites for EIAs and advice on Environmental Statements in relation to European Sites.
- E. advise Councils on European Site considerations for Pre-Application Discussions (PAD) and attend PAD meetings where necessary.
- F. support Councils throughout the preparation of Local Development Plans (LDP) carrying out the HRA to include sourcing baseline data, informing preferred options, initiating HRA at Plan Strategy stage, revising during the LDP process and finalising prior to adoption of the Local Policies Plan.
- G. make recommendations on environmental data required by councils.
- H. provide standing advice, capacity building and additional site/office based advice to councils to councils in relation to European site.

I would seek the agreement of your Council, in principle, to this Shared Service Model. I would ask you identify a Liaison Officer from your Planning Service to work on a draft Service Level Agreement which will be presented to your Council in the next number of weeks.

Yours Sincerely



Anne Donaghy
Clerk & Chief Executive



Belfast District Council (Shadow)

Report to:	Shadow Planning Committee
Subject:	Planning Scheme of Delegation & Operating Protocol
Date:	19 th February 2015
Reporting Officer:	John Walsh, Town Solicitor, Ext 6042
Contact Officer:	Nora Largey, Solicitor, Ext 6049

1	Relevant Background Information
1.1	Members will recall that under Sections 7 and 19 of the Local Government (NI) Act 2014 the Council is required to put in place governance arrangements for the new Council as of 1st April 2015.
1.2	In addition, Section 31(1) of the Planning Act (NI) 2011 requires the Council to produce a scheme of delegation in relation to planning functions. The overall objective of such a scheme is to ensure that arrangements for decision-making on applications for local developments are efficient whilst ensuring that proposals that raise strong local views or sensitive issues for the local environment can be dealt with by elected members.
1.3	Delegating determination of some planning applications to officers is also seen as a critical factor affecting the overall performance of the development management process as it helps ensure that decisions are taken at the most appropriate level, procedures are clear and transparent, costs are minimised and members have more time to concentrate on complex applications.
1.4	At its meeting of 23 rd October 2014, the Committee granted authority to officers to review the existing streamlining process and draft a Scheme of Delegation to include provision for safeguarding Members' ability to have a decision brought before the Committee.
1.5	Party Group Briefings were undertaken in December 2014 in relation to the proposed scheme of delegation and operating protocol of the Committee. Since then extensive work has been undertaken by council officers and colleagues in the Planning Service to draft a Scheme of Delegation and Operating Protocol.

2	Key Issues
2.1	<p>The main issues that emerged from the Party Group Briefings were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members should be able to determine those applications which they feel are important, including for example applications for dwellings of 5 or more; • Members should have the opportunity to fully consider those applications that are regarded to have the most significance and impact upon the city; • Sufficient safeguards should be built into the Scheme of Delegation for the Committee to consider applications that would otherwise normally be delegated.
2.2	<p>A draft Scheme of Delegation is attached for member's consideration at Appendix One.</p>
2.3	<p>Members will see that the Scheme does not apply to, amongst other things, the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All major applications; • Applications on Council land; • Applications for developments of 5 or more dwellings; • Demolition of listed buildings; • Change of use to purpose built student accommodation, houses of multiple occupation, amusement arcades and hot food bars.
2.4	<p>Further safeguards have been included; namely:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where a function is normally delegated but raises issues which the Director believes should be considered by the Committee, that application will be referred to the Committee; and • The Town Solicitor, in consultation with the Director, may refer a decision back to Committee for reconsideration.
2.5	<p>Members are also referred to the draft Operating Protocol of the Committee which is attached at Appendix Two.</p>
2.6	<p>The key aims of the Protocol are to ensure that those who apply for, or make representation to, applications before the Committee are able to make informed representations and that the Committee makes decisions in a sound, lawful, and transparent way and in a timely and efficient manner.</p>
2.7	<p>In drafting the Protocol officers have had regard to the relevant legal requirements, guidance issued by the Department and the existing Protocol used by the Council's Licensing Committee.</p>

2.8	As set out in the Protocol, all members of the Council will receive a weekly list of all received applications; including details of those delegated to officers in accordance with the Council's Scheme of Delegation. Members can request that any application is brought before the Committee for consideration and the request will be determined by the Director, in conjunction with the Town Solicitor, and who will assess whether the reasons given for the request are material considerations and of significant weight.
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3	Resource Implications
3.1	It is not possible to determine resource implications at present; though it should be noted that the proportion of decisions brought before committee would have an impact upon the required committee support provided by Democratic Services, Legal Services and the Planning Service.

4	Equality and Good Relations Implications
4.1	None.

5	Call In
5.1	Members are advised that any decision relating to the governance of the committee would be subject to Call In.

5	Recommendations
5.1	<p>Under the Planning Act (NI) 2011, the Council's Scheme of Delegation has to be approved by the Department for the Environment before it can be adopted by the Council. Given the timescales involved, the Scheme has been forwarded to the Department, subject to Committee and Council approval.</p> <p>The Committee is therefore asked to;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Note the contents of the Scheme of Delegation, which has been forwarded to the Department for approval; and • Consider the draft Operating Protocol for the Planning Committee.

6	Documents attached
6.1	<p>Appendix One – Scheme of Delegation in relation to Planning</p> <p>Appendix 2 – Operating Protocol</p>

7	Decision Tracking
7.1	The person responsible for any actions arising from your meeting is John Walsh.

3.9 DIRECTOR OF PLANNING AND PLACE

The Director of Planning and Place will be the principal advisor on all planning related matters for the Council.

The Director will develop, lead and manage the planning functions of the Council to ensure that the planning service fulfils its potential in shaping the future of the City and delivering the Council's aspirations for urban development and design.

The Director will develop the Local Development Plan, and associated local policy documents, so as to deliver the Council's strategic priorities in relation to place shaping, economic growth, regeneration and the inter-connection of spatial planning with community planning.

In conjunction with the Director of Organisational Development, the Director will develop and implement a capacity building programme for elected members and officers in relation to decision making and strategic planning.

The exercise of the following functions, in line with relevant Council policies, is delegated to the Director of Planning and Place:

3.91 The functions listed below in relation to the legislation set out in Appendix D and legislation made thereunder for which the Planning Committee has responsibility:

- (a) determining applications for small scale office development (up to 200sq metres);
- (b) minor alterations and extensions to, residential, community/civic, commercial or industrial premises;
- (c) determining applications for minor works such as works required for the purposes of providing disability access; the erection of smoking shelters etc;
- (d) determining applications for the alteration and extension for residential purposes to existing residential units to include residential garages or sheds within the curtilage of an existing dwelling;

- (e) determining applications for developments of up to 4 dwellings;
- (f) determining applications for the display of advertisements;
- (g) determining applications for change of use excluding those relating to purpose built student accommodation, houses of multiple occupation, amusement arcades and hot food bars;
- (h) determining applications for works to buildings or structures in conservation areas and areas of townscape character;
- (i) determining applications for listed building consent, excluding demolition;
- (j) determining applications for landscaping, car parking and other minor works to the main use of the land on which they are to be located;
- (k) enforcing all regulations, orders and bye-laws made under the said legislation;
- (l) in consultation with the Town Solicitor, instituting legal proceedings on behalf of the Council;
- (m) authorising officers pursuant to relevant legislation for the purpose of exercising statutory powers;
- (n) issuing and serving certificates of lawful development;
- (o) the variation and removal of conditions except when the variation and removal relates to, or constitutes, a major development;
- (p) exercising all powers in relation to the issue and renewal (but not refusal) of permits and licences except those permits or licences that relate to, or constitute, a major development;

APPENDIX 1

- (q) effecting (but not cancelling or refusing to effect) registrations and maintaining statutory registers;
- (r) registering notices and charges in the Statutory Charges Register;
- (s) exercising the Council's powers in relation to the preservation of trees;
- (t) executing works in default of compliance with any notice or order and in an emergency where empowered by statute and recovering the costs of so doing;
- (u) the temporary listing of buildings in urgent cases;
- (v) in consultation with the Town Solicitor, lodging objections in relation to planning applications where the Council has been notified as part of the neighbourhood notification scheme;
- (w) deeming as refused, any application where all of the necessary supporting documentation has been reasonably requested but not provided, without reasonable excuse, to the Council within six weeks from the date of receipt of that application;
- (x) generally enforcing all other statutory powers connected to the exercise of the planning functions which have been conferred upon the Council.

3.92 The delegated functions set out above do not apply to the following planning applications:

- (a) Those made by elected members;
- (b) Those made by Council staff;
- (c) Those made by the Council;
- (d) Those in which the Council has an interest or estate.

- 3.93 All other applications or permissions which are not specifically listed in paragraph 3.91 shall be deemed to be delegated unless otherwise provided for within this Scheme.
- 3.94 Where a function is normally delegated but raises issues which the Director believes should be considered by the Committee, that application will be referred to the Committee.
- 3.95 The Town Solicitor, in consultation with the Director, may refer a decision back to Committee for reconsideration.

Legislation to be inserted in Appendix D

- Planning (Northern Ireland) Act 2011
- The Planning Reform (Northern Ireland) Order 2006
- The Planning (Amendment) (Northern Ireland) Order 2003
- The Conservation (Natural Habitats, etc) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1995
- Planning (Compensation, etc.) Act (Northern Ireland) 2001
- Planning (Northern Ireland) Order 1991
- The Planning and Building Regulations (Amendment) (Northern Ireland) Order 1990
- The Planning (Amendment) (Northern Ireland) Order 1982
- The Land Compensation (Northern Ireland) Order 1982
- The Planning Blight (Compensation) (Northern Ireland) Order 1981
- The Enterprise Zones (Northern Ireland) Order 1981
- The Private Streets (Northern Ireland) Order 1980
- The Planning (Amendment) (Northern Ireland) Order 1978
- The Land Acquisition and Compensation (Northern Ireland) Order 1973
- The Planning (Northern Ireland) Order 1972
- Planning and Land Compensation Act (Northern Ireland) 1973
- The Land Development Values (Compensation) Act (Northern Ireland) 1965
- Lands Tribunal and Compensation Act (Northern Ireland) 1964
- Caravans Act (Northern Ireland) 1963

OPERATING PROTOCOL

BELFAST CITY COUNCIL PLANNING COMMITTEE

INTRODUCTION

1. The following protocol has been developed for use by the Planning Committee ('the Committee'). It should be read alongside relevant provisions of the Council's Standing Orders and the Code of Conduct for Councillors and is not intended to replace either document. The key aims of the protocol are to ensure that:
 - a) Those who apply for, or make representation to, applications before the Committee are able to make informed representations and know the case which they have to meet; and
 - b) The Committee makes decisions in a sound, lawful, and transparent way and in a timely and efficient manner.

REMIT OF THE COMMITTEE

2. The primary roles of the Committee will include:
 - a) Exercising the Council's powers and duties in relation to local planning policies, plan strategies, the statement of community involvement and any other planning documents;
 - b) Exercising the Council's powers in relation to listed buildings;
 - c) Consideration of applications for planning permission and consents in accordance with the Council's Scheme of Delegation;
 - d) Responding to consultations issued by the Department of Environment, or any other Department, in relation to planning matters;
 - e) Responding to consultations in relation to regionally significant or major applications to be determined by the Department of Environment;

- f) Scrutiny of the Council's delivery of planning functions.
- 3. More detailed terms of reference can be found in XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX.

FREQUENCY & TIME OF MEETINGS

- 4. It is recommended that the Committee should meet every month; though there should be flexibility for additional meetings if required.
- 5. Dates and times will be advertised at least 5 days in advance on the Council website.

SCHEME OF DELEGATION

- 6. As per the requirements of Section 31 of the Planning Act (NI) 2011 the Council will operate a scheme of delegation for planning outlining delegation both to the Committee and officers (this can be found at XXXXXXXXXXXXX). The overall objective is to ensure that arrangements for decision-making on applications for local developments are efficient whilst ensuring that proposals that raise strong local views or sensitive issues for the local environment can be dealt with by elected members. Delegating determination of some planning applications to officers is also seen as a critical factor affecting the overall performance of the development management process as it helps ensure that decisions are taken at the most appropriate level, procedures are clear and transparent, costs are minimised and members have more time to concentrate on complex applications.
- 7. In respect of development management, authority is delegated to appointed officers for local, generally non-contentious, applications.
- 8. Enforcement activities are also delegated to appointed officers. However the Committee will receive periodical reports on enforcement activities.

9. Major applications, applications made by the Council or an elected member of the Council, and applications relating to land in which the Council has an interest in, cannot be delegated.
10. All members of the Council will receive a weekly list of all received applications; including details of those delegated to officers in accordance with the Council's Scheme of Delegation.
11. If a member wishes to request that a delegated application is brought before the Committee this must be done, in writing or by email, within 14 days of the application being publically advertised. Members should notify Democratic Services of this request stating clearly their reasons, which must be material considerations.
12. Democratic Services will then liaise with the Town Solicitor's office and the authorised senior planning officer to determine whether the reasons which have been set out are material considerations and are of significant weight to allow the application to be referred to Committee. Democratic Services will then advise the relevant member of the decision.

FORMAT OF MEETINGS

13. Committee meetings (dates, times and papers) will be published on the Council's website at least 5 calendar days in advance.
14. Case officer reports will also be available on the Northern Ireland Planning Portal.
15. Committee Papers will typically include the following:
 - a) **Minutes of the previous meeting for approval as a complete record;**
 - b) **Details of delegated applications for noting only by the Committee;**
 - c) **Details of proposed pre-determination hearings**
 - d) **Details of appeals (notified and concluded);**

- e) **Details of non-delegated applications (including those brought back following deferral) for consideration by the Committee;**
- f) **Details of applications of regional significance with an impact upon the Council area in respect of which the Council is a statutory consultee or where it may wish to make representations;**
- g) **Papers relating to the development of policy.**

16. The Town Solicitor, in consultation with the authorised senior planning officer, may refer a decision back to Committee for the purposes of reconsideration.

17. A quorum, as outlined in the Council's standing orders, is required for the Committee to convene.

18. Councillors will be required to declare an interest in any item on the agenda at the beginning of the meeting and must then leave the meeting for that item. Members will then be invited to return to the meeting room and notified of the Committee's decision before consideration of the next item commences.

19. The Committee will discuss each applications that has been presented before taking a vote on one of the following options:

- a) Approve the application with conditions as recommended;
- b) Approve the application with amendments to the recommended conditions;
- c) Refuse the application for the reasons recommended;
- d) Refuse the application with additional, fewer or amended reasons;
- e) Refuse the application contrary to officers recommendations;
- f) Defer the application with a direction for additional information or clarification; or for a Members' site visit.

20. The Committee can defer consideration of an application to a subsequent meeting for further information, further negotiations or a site visit. Deferrals have an adverse effect on processing times, and the applicant can lodge an appeal after a period of time if the Council has not made a decision. The Committee will therefore generally only defer an application once. The

member proposing deferral must provide clear reasons as to why a deferral is necessary.

21. The Chair has a casting vote.
22. Members must be present for the entire item, including the officer's introduction and update; otherwise they cannot take part in the debate or vote on that item.

PUBLIC REPRESENTATIONS

23. Meetings of the Committee will be open to the public; however, seating within the Committee chamber will be limited according to the venue capacity and associated fire and safety regulations.
24. Seating for the applicant, objectors and statutory consultees will be reserved but only for the time in which their application is being considered.
25. Only those who have made written submissions and registered a request to speak in respect of the application shall be permitted to make oral representations before the Committee.
26. Speakers will not be permitted to circulate papers to members at the Committee meeting.
27. The Committee may agree to accept representations outside these procedures but will only do so in exceptional circumstances.
28. All Committee papers will be available online. However, access to some documentation may be restricted by virtue of the Council's publication policy. Information which is determined to be exempt by virtue of Schedule 6 of the Local Government (Northern Ireland) Act 2014 may be published where the Council considers that the public interest in disclosing same outweighs the public interest in maintaining the exemption.
29. If documentation is provided directly to any member of the Council in relation to a particular application it must be copied to the Committee clerk in advance

of the meeting in respect of which the application is to be determined so as to ensure that the issues raised can be fully investigated by officers prior to the Committee hearing. Failure to do so may result in either the documentation being disregarded or the hearing being deferred.

30. Deputations shall be heard in the following order:
 - a. Statutory consultees¹;
 - b. Objectors and/or their representatives;
 - c. Applicant and/or their representatives and/or those supporting the application.
31. If a statutory consultee is required to attend they will be notified of this request at least one week in advance of the Committee meeting.
32. Only one deputation on behalf of the applicant and or/those supporting the application will be permitted to address committee.
33. Only one deputation on behalf of those objecting to an application will be permitted to address committee.
34. Deputations, unless otherwise agreed in advance by the Committee, shall consist of no more than 3 persons. Where there are 3 or more persons or groups wishing to address the committee they will be required to arrange a single deputation to express their representations.
35. The applicant's, or their representatives, right to address committee shall be prioritised over other persons/groups wishing to speak in support of an application.
36. Deputations shall be confined to the making of a short address either by each member of the deputation or, should they so wish, by their nominated spokesperson or legal adviser.

¹ As per Articles 13 &14 and Schedule 3 of the Planning (General Development Procedure) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015

APPENDIX 2

37. Each deputation shall be permitted a maximum of 5 minutes to address the Committee. Where more than one person wishes to make representation the 5 minutes should be shared between the members of the deputation.
38. All members of a deputation must continue to be seated and remain silent whilst other deputations are being made to the Committee.
39. Cross-examination, discussion or any type of debate between persons making representations to Committee shall not be permitted.
40. Once all deputations have been made, the parties shall be permitted an opportunity to rebut any factual inaccuracies only which may have arisen from the oral representations of another deputation and in respect of which they have not had an opportunity to comment. This will be strictly limited to responding to any such issue and the party will not be permitted to rehearse any representations which have already been made.
41. The Committee may, upon advice from officers, exclude any deputation from being present during the whole or part of the time when any other deputations are being made due to the confidential nature of information relevant to the application to be discussed; or for such other reasons as may be deemed appropriate.
42. The Committee may seek clarification from those who have spoken on any issues raised by them but should not enter into a debate.
43. Officers can address any issues raised during the course of representations from any deputation and the Committee may seek clarification from officers.
44. The Chair will ensure that those making representations to the Committee adhere to the time limits set out in this Protocol. These time limits will have been communicated to those making representations in advance of the meeting.
45. The Chair may at any time during the hearing of deputations, if they think it necessary to secure order, suspend the meeting and direct the removal of

any individual from the meeting, or order that the meeting be cleared of all deputations.

46. When hearing deputations, the Chair will require members engaging in debate to desist, until such time as all relevant information has been received.
47. The Chair may bring the questioning of any person appearing before the Committee to a close provided s/he is satisfied that all relevant issues have been addressed. The Chairman may also prevent duplication of questions being put.
48. If a member of the Committee moves that the question be put to a vote and the Chair is of the opinion that the application before the Committee has been sufficiently discussed, he shall put the motion to the vote.

DECISIONS CONTRARY TO OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

49. The decision as to whether to grant an application lies with the Committee and it is entitled to come to a decision contrary to officer recommendations.
50. Any such decision may be subject to legal challenge and members must therefore ensure that the rationale for the decision are fully explained and based on proper planning considerations.
51. The senior authorised planning officer and/or the Council's solicitor will always be given the opportunity to explain the implications of the Committee's decision prior to a vote being taken on any such proposal.
52. The reasons for the decision contrary to the officer's recommendation must be formally recorded in the minutes and a copy placed on the planning application file / electronic record.

DECISIONS CONTRARY TO PLANNING POLICY

53. In general, planning decisions should be taken in accordance with the local development plan and any other associated planning policy documents. If a

Committee member proposes, seconds or supports a decision contrary to the local development plan they will need to clearly identify and understand the planning reasons for doing so, and clearly demonstrate how these reasons justify departure from the local development plan. The reasons for any decisions which are made contrary to the development plan must be formally recorded in the minutes and a copy placed on the planning application file / electronic record.

PRE-DETERMINATION HEARINGS

54. The Committee must hold pre-determination hearings for those major developments which have been subject to notification (i.e. referred to the Department but returned to the Council for determination)² prior to the application being determined.
55. Paragraph 24-48 of this Protocol shall also apply to pre-determination hearings.
56. The Committee may also hold a pre-determination hearing, at their own discretion, where they consider it necessary, to take on board local community views as well as those in support of the development.
57. The applicant and any other person who makes representations to the Council in respect of the application will be afforded an opportunity to appear before the Committee.
58. In deciding whether to hold a pre-determination hearing, members should take into account the following factors (please note this list is not exclusive):
 - a) the relevance of the objections in planning terms;
 - b) the extent to which relevant objections are considered to be representative of the community, particularly in the context of pre-application community consultation;
 - c) the potential of causing undue delay in the decision making process;
and
 - d) the numbers of representations against the proposal in relation to

² Regulation 7 of the Planning (Development Management) Regulations (NI) 2015

where the proposal is and the number of people likely to be affected by the proposal.

59. Any hearing will take place after the expiry of the period for making representations on the application but before the Committee hears the application. The Council will endeavour to hold pre-determination hearings on a separate date from the Committee meeting at which it will be considered; however this may not always be possible.
60. For these hearings the case officer will produce a report detailing the processing of the application to date and the planning issues to be considered. If the Committee decides to hold the hearing on the same day as it wishes to determine the application the report to councillors will also contain a recommendation.

PREPARATION OF PLANNING POLICY DOCUMENTS

61. Planning policy documents include the local development plan, local planning policies, plan strategies, the statement of community involvement and any other development plan documents or guidance.
62. The Committee should have a high level of involvement in the preparation and approval of planning policy documents.
63. Once approved by the Committee, planning policy documents will be referred to the Council's Strategic Policy and Resource Committee who will assess the document to determine whether it consistent with the broader strategic objectives of the Council.
64. If Strategic Policy and Resource Committee consider any of the said planning policy documents to be inconsistent with those objectives, the Committee will reconsider the relevant document in light of the issues raised by the Strategic Policy and Resource Committee.

65. Once the Committee has reconsidered the relevant document it shall be reported to the Strategic Policy and Resource Committee and will be subject to ratification by full Council.

SITE VISITS

66. Site visits may be arranged subject to Committee agreement. They should normally only be requested where the impact of the proposed development is difficult to visualise from the plans and other available material and the expected benefit outweighs the delay and additional costs that will be incurred.
67. Only members of the Committee and officers should attend organised site visits.
68. Members will not carry out their own unaccompanied site visits as there may be issues around permission to access the land, they will not have all of the relevant information from the relevant planning officer and, if a councillor is seen with an applicant or objector, it might lead to allegations of bias.
69. A nominated officer will record the date of the visit, attendees and any other relevant information.
70. The Chair, or Vice Chair in the Chair's absence, will ensure that the site visit is conducted in accordance with this protocol and the Code of Conduct for Councillors.
71. A statement will be read out by the Chair before the commencement of the site visit to remind members of the purpose of the visit and the terms of this protocol. The planning officer will then remind members of the proposal and the main issues.
72. A nominated officer will prepare a written report of the members' site visit which should then be presented to the Committee meeting at which the application is to be determined.

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