

# Planning Committee

Tuesday, 15th June, 2021

## MEETING OF THE MEMBERS OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE HELD REMOTELY VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS

- Members present: Councillor Carson (Chairperson);  
Councillors Brooks, Matt Collins,  
Garrett, Groogan, Hanvey, Hussey,  
Hutchinson, Maskey, McCullough, McMullan,  
Murphy and O'Hara.
- In attendance: Mr. A. Reid, Strategic Director of Place and  
Economy;  
Mr. E. Baker, Planning Manager  
(Development Management);  
Ms. N. Largey, Divisional Solicitor;  
Ms. C. Donnelly, Democratic Services Officer; and  
Mrs. L. McLornan, Democratic Services Officer.

### **Apologies**

An apology for inability to attend was reported from Councillor Whyte.

### **Minutes**

The minutes of the meetings of 18th and 20th May were taken as read and signed as correct. It was reported that those minutes had been adopted by the Council at its meeting on 1st June, subject to the omission of those matters in respect of which the Council had delegated its powers to the Committee.

### **Declarations of Interest**

Councillor Murphy declared an interest in Item 6g, namely LA04/2020/1593/F - Refurbishment works to Marrowbone Park, in that he had been involved with the project at different stages and had spoken with officers about the design of the scheme. He left the meeting for the duration of the item and did not participate in the vote.

### **Committee Site Visit**

The Members noted that a site visit had been undertaken to the following site, on 3rd June:

- **LA04/2020/1363/F** - 21 apartments and 3 retail units with ancillary lobby space, refuse storage, bicycle storage and amenity space between 173 Newtownards Road and 1-5 Templemore Avenue.

### **Planning Appeals Notified**

The Members noted the receipt of correspondence in respect of a number of planning appeals which had been submitted to the Planning Appeals Commission, together with the outcomes of a range of hearings which had been considered by the Commission.

### **Planning Decisions Issued**

The Members noted a list of decisions which had been taken under the delegated authority of the Strategic Director of Place and Economy, together with all other planning decisions which had been issued by the Planning Department between 10th May and 7th June.

### **Vesting Orders**

The Members noted that correspondence had been received from the Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE), advising that:

- a vesting Order had become operative on 24th May, 2021, in respect of Land at 167 to 175 Broadway, and that it was now within NIHE ownership; and
- it had applied for a Vesting Order for Land at Alloa Street, between the former properties of 170/168 Manor Street and 49 Alloa Street.

The Members of the Committee agreed to recommend to the Chief Executive that they had no objections to the Orders.

### **Miscellaneous**

#### **Planning Performance Report 2020 - 21** **and Improvement Plan**

The Planning Manager (Development Management) provided the Committee with a detailed overview of the Planning Service's performance in 2020/2021. He explained that the report provided statistics on the progress across the three statutory targets for major development applications, local development applications and enforcement cases. It also provided information relating to performance against the Council's corporate targets.

The Committee was advised that a total of 2,515 valid applications had been received between 1st April and 31st March 2021, which was an 8% decrease compared to the same period for the previous year. Compared to the same period last year, he explained that the number of Local Applications which had been received was broadly similar while the number of Major applications was down 12%. He highlighted to the Committee that "other development", such as Certificates of Lawful Use Development and Discharge of Condition applications, were not included in statutory performance targets but currently made up 59% of applications received.

He outlined that the Planning Service had received 77 Pre-Application Discussions (PADs), including 12 PADs for Major development and 65 for Local development. 29 PADs had been concluded, all for Local development.

The Members were advised that 2,132 decisions were issued between 1st April 2020 and 31st March 2021, which was 16% less than the same period in 2019/20. 95% of applications had been approved.

The Planning Manager outlined that the Statutory target was that major planning applications were processed from the date valid to decision issued or withdrawal date within an average of 30 weeks.

The Members were advised that 28 major applications had been received in the year 2020/2021, which was four fewer than the previous year. The Planning Manager explained that 40 major applications had been processed during the period which was 38% more than in the same period last year and the second highest since the Council became a Planning Authority in 2015. He highlighted that performance was 44.2 weeks, slightly down on 37 weeks from the previous year, however, the regional average was 61.8 weeks.

He reported that 1,368 local applications were decided or withdrawn in the same period, which was 234 fewer than the same period last year. The Members were advised that, last year, the average processing time had been 14 weeks, whereas this year it was 19 weeks, which was 4 weeks over the target of 15 weeks. He explained that the regional average processing time was 17.8 weeks.

The Members were advised that the largest number of local applications processed related to householder applications, such as domestic extensions, conservatories, loft conversions, garages and outbuildings. He reported that there were 676 householder applications received, which was a 26% increase on the previous year. He explained that it was reflective of a nationwide increase which was almost certainly linked to the pandemic and people's desire for more accommodation.

In relation to Statutory Consultee Performance, he reported that the Department for Infrastructure had established a Planning Forum which was examining ways to improve the role of statutory consultees in the planning application process. Belfast City Council was one of three councils on the Planning Forum representing local government.

In relation to enforcement, he explained that the Statutory target was that 70% of all enforcement cases were progressed to conclusion within 39 weeks of the receipt of complaint. He advised the Members that the number of enforcement cases opened during 2020/21 was 443, which was a decrease of 54% over the previous year. The number of enforcement cases which had concluded during the period was 618, which was 23% less than the previous year. He outlined that the two main reasons for closure were that no breach had occurred (26%) and that cases had been remedied or resolved (38%).

In conclusion, he advised the Members that the performance for 2020/21 was inevitably impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. He explained that, during Q1 and Q2, there was limited access to the office for staff, limited IT capacity for staff to work from

home, representations which had submitted by post could not be considered, site visits could not be carried out and some staff were furloughed. The Members were advised that this had reduced the number of applications, PADs and enforcement cases which could be processed and which had therefore increased overall processing times.

However, despite those significant challenges, he reported that the Council's Planning Service had adapted quickly and had been operating a full service (other than public access to planning reception) since the second half of Q2. Notably, it had included the promotion of electronic submissions for applications and PADs.

The pandemic had initially resulted in a backlog of enforcement complaints. He explained that the focus had been on clearing the backlog to improve the handling of new complaints. Whilst it had meant that the processing target had been missed for the first time since 2015, it had allowed the Service to reduce enforcement complaints to a more manageable level, which would have significant benefits moving forward.

The Planning Manager detailed how the Service continued to work through and develop its Improvement Plan, with many actions completed and important new areas of work having been identified. The most significant area of improvement work related to the implementation of a new planning IT system to replace the outgoing Planning Portal. He advised that it would provide enhanced systems for processing planning applications and enforcement complaints, as well as a new public website interface. The new system would allow customers to submit online applications for the first time in Northern Ireland and it was expected to go live during the Spring of 2022.

With regards to the review of the Council's Planning Application Checklist, completed in February 2021, it had demonstrated that it had had a very positive impact on improving the quality of planning applications and processing times. The planning manager outlined that it had also started to shift the culture and attitude of customers towards submitting much better-quality planning application at the outset of the process. The Department had already confirmed that it would adopt that model through changes to the legislation to improve information requirements for new planning applications. The Planning Manager advised the Committee of the launch of Phase 3 of the Application Checklist in September 2021, when it would be applied to all applications except Householders, Adverts and minor Local applications, as well as new information requirements in relation to outline applications, telecommunications, employability and skills and front-loading draft S76 planning agreements for Major applications.

He outlined the new "FastTrack" process for the most straightforward applications and explained that it was already showing a positive impact on processing times. He also explained that they continued to implement the enforcement audit recommendations with an impending relaunch of the enforcement service, new customer guidance and new Enforcement Operating Principles.

A Member stated that she had concerns regarding the time that enforcement cases took and that it was extremely difficult to get information from officers in relation to updates in respect of such cases. The Divisional Solicitor and the Planning Manager

advised the Committee Members that, due to General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the need to safeguard the investigation process, there were real limitations in terms of what information could be shared. The Divisional Solicitor explained that a report would be submitted to a future meeting in respect of the change of process in relation to enforcement cases.

A number of Members stated that they wished to put on record their thanks to the staff in the Planning Service and in Democratic Services for the work which had been carried out in terms of meeting the targets and adapting to the significant challenges and changes which had been required in response to the pandemic.

In accordance with the Council decision of 4th May 2021, the Chief Executive exercised her delegated authority:

- to note the reports; and
- that a report would be submitted to a future meeting in respect of the change of process to planning enforcement in light of GDPR.

### **Restricted Items**

**The information contained in the reports associated with the following two items is restricted in accordance with Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.**

Resolved – That the Committee agrees to exclude the members of the Press and public from the meeting during discussion of these items as, due to the nature of the items, there would be a disclosure of exempt information as described in Section 42(4) and Section 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.

### **Appointment of the Director of Planning and Building Control**

The Members were advised that, following a rigorous selection process, Ms. Kate Bentley, had been appointed to the post of Director of Planning and Building Control.

### **Request for a Special Meeting**

The Members of the Committee agreed to hold a remote Special Meeting on Thursday, 24 June at 1.00pm, for the purpose of considering the Chancery House application (LA04/2019/2653/F).

### **Casement Park - Section 76 Consultation**

A Member expressed concern that Members had not been given long enough to consider the document which was over 200 pages.

Moved by Councillor Collins  
Seconded by Councillor Hanvey and

Resolved – That the Members agree to defer the item to the Special Meeting of the Members of the Committee, to take place on Thursday 24th June; and, in the meantime, that officers write to the Department for Infrastructure, urging them to share the contents of the Section 76 Agreement with local residents, in order to help facilitate the consultation process.

### **Planning Applications**

**THE MEMBERS OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE CONSIDERED THE FOLLOWING ITEMS IN ORDER TO MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE IN PURSUANCE OF THE POWERS DELEGATED TO HER BY THE COUNCIL ON 4TH MAY, 2021**

### **Withdrawn Item**

The Members noted that the following application had been withdrawn from the agenda:

- **LA04/2020/1158/F** - Demolition of existing building and erection of 65No Apartments including 20% social housing at 1-5 Redcar Street.

**LA04/2020/0847/F & LA04/2020/1208/DCA - Partial demolition and redevelopment of existing buildings to provide 16 apartments, communal bin store and landscaped communal garden at 25-29 University Road**

Moved by Councillor Groogan  
Seconded by Councillor O'Hara and

Resolved – That the Members of the Committee agree to recommend to the Chief Executive to defer consideration of the application to enable a site visit to be undertaken in order to allow the Members to acquaint themselves with the location and the proposals at first hand, particularly in relation to the Area of Townscape Character and the Conservation Area, the amenity space and the fire access.

The Members noted, as the application had not been presented, that all Members present at the next meeting, would be able to take part in the debate and vote on this item.

**(Reconsidered item) LA04/2020/2200/F & LA04/2020/2201/DCA - Demolition of Nos. 27 to 37 Linenhall Street and Nos. 8-10 Clarence Street and erection of seven storey office building at 8 -10 Clarence Street 27-37 Linenhall Street and existing car park at the corner of Linenhall Street and Clarence Street**

The Principal Planning officer provided the Members with the details of the application.

The Principal Planning officer reported that the application was scheduled for presentation to the Planning Committee on 17th April, 2021. However, following the publication of the agenda for that meeting, the agent had requested that consideration of the application be deferred to allow for the submission of a viability assessment and an updated redline to enable further discussion in relation to public realm improvements. At the April meeting, the Members had been asked to consider the request for a deferral but officers had highlighted that a viability assessment would not address the fundamental design issues with the proposal. At that meeting the Committee had resolved to defer consideration of the application, to allow the developer to submit additional information.

The Principal Planning officer explained that further information had been submitted on 7th May 2021, including:

- Further justification of design and 3D visuals showing potential design amendments and a case presented to suggest the changes would be detrimental to the resultant character of the building and the area.
- Confirmation sought as to the outcome of consultations in relation to public realm contributions, as per the *Developer Contribution Framework*, and a reluctance to extend a red line in the absence of any demonstrated need for such improvements.
- Confirmation that the developer was willing to enter into a Section 76 Agreement to facilitate a contribution towards wider public realm improvement schemes within the area.
- A letter from Savills, whereby it was argued that the buildings did not make a material contribution to the conservation area as their removal and appropriate replacement would not have an adverse effect on the area. It was claimed that efforts were made to market the site and the only interest was based on the demolition of the existing buildings and redevelopment. It was also claimed that the spaces within the existing buildings were deemed unsuitable, and what was felt as restricted access to two of the buildings made them unsuitable for modern office providers.

He explained that officers remained of the opinion that:

- any suggested design changes would be to the benefit of the overall character of the building, the appearance of the conservation area and would reduce the impact on the adjacent listed Ulster Hall;
- a consultation response from DFC remained outstanding, however officers remained of the opinion that the red line should be extended to facilitate public realm improvements in the area immediately surrounding the proposed building. That was a standard requirement for such schemes within the city centre to mitigate the development and to enhance the character and appearance of the area;
- it was considered that insufficient information had been submitted in terms of the overall viability of the scheme, and the merits for

- removing the existing buildings which Officers considered made a positive contribution to the character of the Linen Conservation Area. Policy BH14 of PPS6 was clear that when a building made a positive contribution, the presumption was in favour of retention, and that the Council should have regard to the same broad criteria for the demolition of listed buildings (para 6.5 and policy BH 10). PPS6 Para 6.5 reinforced the ethos that if the building made a contribution, then the presumption to retain and protect should only be relaxed under exceptional circumstances, including condition of the building, cost of repairing and maintaining, efforts made to retain the building and alternative proposals for the site. On balance, in the absence of what was considered to be sufficient information to justify the removal of the buildings and without an acceptable redevelopment proposal, it was the view of officers that the proposal was contrary to PPS6; and
- there was insufficient evidence provided in relation to the marketing of the site, either in terms of selling or renting the existing buildings.

The Members' attention was drawn to the Late Items pack, whereby an objection had been received, concerned that the 3rd, 4th, 5th and 6th floor windows, on the western elevation, would prejudice the future development capacity of the adjacent site and that it was over-dominant in size and scale. The Principal Planning officer advised the Members that it was not considered that the windows would significantly prejudice the development of the adjacent site however, the scale of the building was considered to be unacceptable and was one of the reasons for recommending refusal.

He also advised the Members that, immediately before the meeting had commenced, correspondence had been received from the Ulster Architectural Heritage Society (UAHS), stating that they supported the officers' recommendation for refusal, as they believed it was contrary to the SPPS and PPS6.

The Members were advised that the scale, height, massing, alignment and form of the building would have a detrimental impact upon the setting of a number of listed buildings, including the Ulster Hall. The Principal Planning officer pointed out that HED objected to the proposal on the grounds of harm to the setting of listed buildings, which was contrary to Policy BH11 of Planning Policy Statement 6.

The proposal included the demolition of two buildings, one on Clarence Street and one on Linenhall Street. The principle of demolition of the building on Linenhall Street, which made a positive contribution to the character of the Linen Conservation Area, was not acceptable and the proposed redevelopment scheme did not enhance the character and appearance of the area as it was of a scale and massing which was unsympathetic to the adjoining buildings and the characteristic built form of the area. Both the Conservation Officer and the Urban Design Officer objected to the proposal.

He explained that the Council had a duty to adopt a precautionary principle and when considering demolition of a building which made a positive contribution to the character of a conservation area there should be clear and convincing evidence that all reasonable efforts had been made to sustain existing uses or find viable new uses, and that those efforts had failed. The onus, therefore, was on the applicant to provide detailed evidence in support of such claims. He stated that officers remained of the view that the applicant had failed to provide such evidence.



The Planning officer outlined that DAERA and NI Water had advised that, at present, the waste water treatment infrastructure did not have sufficient capacity to serve the proposed development and no acceptable, alternative solution had been proposed. However, for the reasons set out in the report, it was considered that the issue could be addressed by a suitably worded planning condition and a refusal reason on that issue was not considered appropriate.

The Chairperson then welcomed Mr. Stinson, agent, to the meeting. Mr. Stinson advised the Committee that:

- he was disappointed with the recommendation to refuse planning permission for a £13 million investment in the City Centre of 6,000 sq metres of Grade A office floorspace;
- the building was separated from the main Ulster Hall by a small extension and was similar to the separation that exists between Ulster Hall and 21 Linenhall Street;
- whilst the Ulster Hall was listed in its entirety, not all aspects of its setting were similar and the existing building heights on Linenhall Street resulted in a different context within which the building could still be appreciated. Para 9.31 of the officer report acknowledged that high-rise contemporary buildings had transformed the built context, and changed the overall context for listed buildings in the conservation area;
- guidance had been given on how the relationship with the Ulster Hall impact could be addressed by amending the roof profile and introducing setbacks, however, it was considered that those features would result in a building that was uncharacteristic of that part of the Conservation Area as the characteristic uniformity and consistency of façade would be lost.
- significant amendments had been made to the scale, form and mass of the building from the previous application;
- the report stated that Linenhall Street and Adelaide Street were defined by large contemporary buildings, yet the officers considered that the building would dominate the immediate streetscape, suggesting that the building was significantly out of scale with the surrounding context. That could not be the case, as it was similar to the height of the building at 21 Linenhall Street and was similar in width and form to other buildings along Linenhall Street and Adelaide Street;
- the Councils Linen Quarter Vision Guidance identified the existing buildings as making a negative contribution to the area;
- the interest for the site following the marketing was in the redevelopment of it;
- the existing car park and associated advertising hoardings detracted from the conservation area. The retention of those unlisted buildings removed the opportunity for the comprehensive redevelopment of the site and importantly the opportunity to enhance the Conservation Area was lost. The proposed development realised the opportunity to enhance the Conservation Area, meeting the test set in legislation, and

- that should weigh significantly in the planning balance;
- the officers report noted that a consultation from the Department for Communities was outstanding yet the officer opinion in the addendum report suggested that public realm improvements were required regardless of the DfC response;
  - the applicant was willing to make a contribution to public realm improvement schemes that the Linen Quarter BID was intending to bring forward for the area to ensure that any public realm was part of a coherent scheme for the Conservation Area and not one that was an isolated change at odds with the surrounding streets so that it would cause harm to, rather than enhance it; and
  - finally, they had met the legislative test to enhance the Conservation Area by removing the car park.

A Member queried how the current buildings were of architectural merit.

In response, Mr. G. Moore, Architect, advised that they did not feel that the buildings contributed positively to the Conservation Area and that the existing corner was a difficult site and was quite alien within the city centre.

The Principal Planning officer confirmed to the Members that the Linen Conservation Area Guide had identified the terraced façade for maintenance/enhancement, rather than a development opportunity, and that it had not been identified as making a negative or a positive contribution. He advised the Members that the Conservation officer was of the view that the building did make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation area.

The Members of the Committee recommended that, in accordance with the Council decision of 4th May 2021, the Chief Executive would exercise her delegated authority to refuse the application for the reasons detailed within the report.

(Councillor McCullough joined the meeting at this point in proceedings)

**(Reconsidered item) LA04/2020/1363/F - 21 apartments and 3 retail units with ancillary lobby space, refuse storage, bicycle storage and amenity space between 173 Newtownards Road and 1-5 Templemore Avenue**

The Principal Planning officer provided the Members with the details of the application for 21 apartments and three retail units within a single building which ranged from four to six storeys in height.

She explained that the application was due to be considered by the Committee on 18th May but that it was deferred so that Members could gain an understanding of the context of the site through a site visit. The Committee had undertaken a site visit on 3rd June.

The Members were advised that the site was located within the development limits for Belfast in both the BUAP 2001 and the draft BMAP 2015. The site was within a housing action area in the BUAP and fell within the draft Templemore Avenue Area of Townscape Character.

She reported that the main issues which had been considered in the analysis of the application included the principle of the proposal at that location; the design, layout and impact on the character and appearance of the area; the impact on residential amenity; impact on built heritage; access, parking, and transport; infrastructure capacity and impact on human health.

While the principle of the proposal and the proposed use were considered acceptable, she explained that it would result in overdevelopment of the site and would be out of character with the area. She also advised the Members that the proposal was contrary to the SPPS and PPS 7, in that it would result in an overly dominant building which would cause unacceptable damage to the local character due to the height, scale, massing, thereby resulting in overdevelopment of the site.

It was also reported that the proposal was contrary to draft BMAP Arterial Route Policy AR02, which stated that building heights and massing should be appropriate to the scale of the street and should generally be two to three storeys high. The proposed amenity provision was inadequate and inappropriate and was therefore contrary to the SPPS and PPS7, in that the development would create undesirable living conditions for prospective residents. The Members were advised that the proposal would impact on the setting of the listed buildings and, as a result, failed to comply with PPS 6.

She outlined that the scheme was not subject to a Pre Application Discussion (PAD) and that the applicant did not take the opportunity during the process to address the issues raised.

The Members were advised that 11 representations and a petition of support with 682 signatures had been received to date. She detailed that the points raised in the letters of support included that the proposal would help to regenerate the area; that the scale of the building should be approved as it was a gateway building on a brownfield site and would enhance the appearance of a derelict site; housing provision; economic and community benefits; and that Cornerstone Ltd's work was of a high standard.

In respect of the impact on parking and traffic, DfI Roads had expressed no objections. Rivers Agency had stated that they required additional information. NI Water and Environmental Health had offered no objections.

The Members were advised that, during the deferral period, the applicant had added an area for a temporary local art installation on the western elevation, in response to the Council's concerns relating to the exposed blank façade of the six storey western elevation. However, while art features could improve the aesthetic appearance of a building, she explained that, in this instance, it did not overcome the concerns as it did not address the scale of the gable and still represented overdevelopment of the site. It was considered that the overall height, scale and massing of the building was over dominant and would result in a clear imbalance along both Templemore Avenue and Newtownards Road.

The Principal Planning officer explained that the latest submission from the applicant included alterations to the ground floor layout, including a reduction in retail space; the provision of additional amenity space on the ground floor and in the form of private balconies to the rear of the two bedroom apartments, and that the design of the central apartments had been altered to open plan living/kitchen spaces in the central apartments to increase natural light. As a result of those changes, the second refusal reason cited in the May 2021 planning committee report, referring to the lack of quality amenity space, could be removed.

Whilst the existing site was vacant, she advised the Members that it did not contribute to any special features of the area. A six storey building of the proposed scale, height and massing was at odds with the two to three storey domestic scale character of the street and that the proposal was more akin to city centre development.

The Members' attention was drawn to the Late Items pack. The Principal Planning officer explained that HED had objected as it was contrary to Policy BH11 of Planning Policy Statement 6 and had offered further comments in relation to the views of the listed buildings which would be impacted by the proposal. They stated that:

- the immediate setting of St Patrick's Church of Ireland would be impacted by the development in views along the Newtownards Road from both the East and West;
- the wider setting of the other three churches – Westbourne, St Matthew's and Megain Memorial would be impacted less so;
- their spires would be obscured by the proposal from certain viewpoints, however it was generally accepted that in an urban context, views were dynamic rather than static;
- the six-storey element would, if permitted, set a new precedent for building heights and that would diminish the character of the existing setting and would appear dominant; and
- the four churches rose above the relatively low buildings as focal points, and contributed to the sense of place and were an important source of local identity.

The Members were advised that the agent had been made aware of officers' design concerns and had been advised that officers would be recommending refusal. The Principal Planning officer outlined that the agent did not amend the scheme but submitted a rebuttal to the issues raised by officers and consultees.

The Chairperson welcomed Mr. J. Martin, agent, and Mr. D. Jackson, managing Director of Cornerstone Construction NI. Together, they advised the Members that:

- the current site and the adjacent site were currently derelict and in need of regeneration;
- the height restrictions mentioned in the draft BMAP were dropped on the adoption of BMAP and they had also not been carried forward into the latest draft plan strategy. Whilst draft BMAP did have material weight, appeal decision 2016/A0202 stated that the draft BMAP urban design criteria should be afforded little weight if it was in compliance with BUAP;

- BUAP encouraged new housing to stimulate urban renewal;
- the Belfast Agenda included the aim of housing 66,000 additional occupants by 2035, with the new Local Development Plan aiming for 37,000 new units in Belfast, and to reach that goal it was crucial that existing brownfield sites, particularly derelict ones, were allowed to increase density;
- the western elevation had intentionally been left blank to allow for the future regeneration of no.171 Newtownards Road and to comply with Building Control Regulations;
- there was no natural heritage to protect on site and the proposal was presented towards the Newtownards Road and stepped down towards the characteristic area of the ATC. The site was included in the ATC by default and detracted from the area. The current vacant site was a gap in the urban streetscape and detracted from the ATC and their proposal would help revive the important intersection;
- the scale, massing and heights of the proposal had been carefully considered, with minor setbacks and contrasting materials all used to break the massing of the proposal whilst also keeping the footprint of the proposal feasible;
- the planning report emphasised the residential nature of the area and the low buildings featured within it. However, the surrounding development and extant site could not be ignored. The streetscape analysis, using VU.CITY clearly highlighted how the building sat within an area of taller buildings, yet they had been disregarded;
- the committee report stated that the opinion of HED had not changed from the submission of the heritage statement which was untrue. In its initial consultation response HED stated that 2 or 3 storeys should be sought, and in its final response it stated it should be 4/5 storeys. It was evident that HED was not opposed to taller buildings, though they felt that the emphasis HED placed on a lower building height was misplaced;
- the proposal did not detract from the nearby church spires, it sat 4metres below Westbourne's Spire, 17metres below the spire of St Patrick's and 27metres below the spire of St Matthew's;
- Cornerstone's approach was about finding the dark corners of the city, the parts that others overlooked, and to create projects which unlocked their potential and that the site in question, which was within walking distance of the city centre, had been overlooked for decades and was why their proposal for the site had been overwhelmingly supported by local residents;
- all Councillors representing the Titanic DEA supported the application;
- the site overlapped two wards, one sat within the 4% most deprived and the other the 8% most deprived in the NI Multiple Deprivation Index;
- the project would be the first in the Northern Ireland to incorporate intentional community building into its model. They had invested significantly in building Community Life, offering residents the opportunity to build relationships with those in the building and incentivise healthy, greener lifestyles; and

- there was a big difference in planning permission being granted and sites actually being developed, and that they were not just chasing a green paper.

A number of Members stated that, while they were sympathetic to the work and the ethos of the applicant, in terms of regenerating the area through the creation of much needed housing, they had to make their decisions in line with Planning Policy. Further Members urged the applicants to ensure that their future proposals were compliant with planning policies at an early stage.

In response, Mr. Martin explained that PPS7, in terms of the scale, height and massing of a building, was down to perception and that there was no written rule with exact numbers. He stated that they felt that the application was in compliance with PPS7 and that the planning officers had ignored the higher, surrounding buildings and had instead focussed on the single and two storey heights which were from a different era. Mr. Jackson added that, having spoken to numerous residents in the area, they had referred to the surrounding dereliction, boarded up buildings and paramilitary murals and that the site was in need of regeneration.

In response to a question from a Member in respect of whether any of the apartments would be social housing, the applicant advised that they envisaged it as mixed tenure, with private and social housing together in one building. They explained that they were in conversations with a housing association but that their first task was to have the planning permission agreed. Mr. Jackson added that they had approached NIHE in relation to social housing for the proposal but, to their surprise, the area was not currently deemed to be an area of social housing need by the NIHE and that this needed to be rectified.

In response to a Member's query regarding the limited amenity space for residents, the deputation advised the Committee that they intended that the residents would congregate within the public realm spaces. They outlined to the Members that they had connected with the Smart Cities' Civic Dollars scheme, which sought to connect people with the local community, encourage shopping with local retailers, encourage volunteering and the use of local parks, with incentives for anyone who did so.

The Chairperson welcomed Ms. N. Golden, HED, to the meeting. She clarified that the images that HED had submitted had demonstrated a four storey building which HED felt could fit comfortably on the site. The application in front of the Members was a third taller. She explained that HED believed that a four storey building, with a setback to five, would striking the right balance in terms of addressing the dereliction which currently existed there and the impact on the Listed Buildings. She added that three storeys of commercial property was roughly equivalent to four storeys of residential.

In response to a Member's question, she clarified that the shoulder height of the Skainos building and the Masonic Hall would be the comfortable height in terms of Policy BH11. She added that the scheme was not far from acceptable to them and, subject to changes, might be acceptable.

The Cornerstone NI representatives stated that they had not been afforded the opportunity to resubmit or change their application and that if they could have made a four storey building viable, they would have done so. They suggested that the Planning Committee should question what the City needed in areas of low value land as opposed to rigidly abiding by planning policies which could just be applied by planners.

The Principal Planning officer, in response to the discussion between the applicant, the Members, HED and officers, explained that those were the types of conversations which should have taken place at PAD stage, upfront and before the application had been submitted. She explained that the applicant was made aware, in early March, of the officers' concerns with the scheme and that their recommendation would be for a refusal. She explained that the applicant had three months in which they could have proposed amendments and that they had used the deferral period to submit amendments to some, but not all, of the issues raised. She added that the applicant had sent a rebuttal to the officers' comments instead of amended plans.

The Members were also advised that there was no indication within the planning application that it was for social housing.

In response to a further Member's query, the Planning Manager explained that the design context of the site was critical and that all sites were different in terms of the surrounding scale, height and massing, nearby listed buildings and individual character of an area. He explained that each design had to be considered within the specific context of the site.

The Members of the Committee recommended that, in accordance with the Council decision of 4th May 2021, the Chief Executive would exercise her delegated authority to refuse the application and that she would use delegated authority to finalise the refusal reasons.

**(Reconsidered Item) LA04/2020/1803/F - Change of use to House of Multiple Occupancy at 60 Springfield Road**

(Councillor McCullough left the meeting at this point in proceedings)

(Councillors Murphy and McMullan did not participate in the vote on this item as they had not been present when it had previously been presented to the Committee)

The Principal Planning officer reminded the Members that the application had been presented to the Committee on 15th December 2020, where it was deferred for further consideration of the roads issues. At the meeting held on 16th March, the item was deferred for a second time, to request that DfI Roads would carry out a site visit.

The Principal Planning officer explained that DfI Roads had visited the site on two occasions, on 13th May at 5pm and again on 26th May at 8.30pm. She outlined that DfI Roads had considered the busiest time on the road network during the evening peak period to be between 4:30pm-6pm, and that the second visit, at 8.30pm, had allowed for the evening peak to pass and for residential parking to have been established.

The Members were advised of that DfI Roads position remained unchanged, and it had raised no objection to the proposal. It was the Department's position that the proposal would not 'prejudice road safety or significantly inconvenience the flow of traffic'.

She reminded the Members that, in respect of the principle of the proposal at that location, the application site fell within an HMO Development Node as designated within the HMO Subject Plan for Belfast (2015). She reported that Policy HMO 3 stated that planning permission would only be granted along the frontages of designated HMO Development Nodes, providing it did not include HMO development at ground floor level within a designated commercial node or shopping area. As the site was not within a designated commercial node or shopping area, the ground floor was not required to be commercial or shopping. The proposal was also in line with Policy HMO 6 as the criteria within that policy were either met or were not relevant.

The Members of the Committee recommended that, in accordance with the Council decision of 4th May 2021, the Chief Executive would exercise her delegated authority to approve the application and to finalise the conditions.

**LA04/2020/1211/F - Mixed use regeneration scheme involving demolition of vacant buildings Hughes Christensen site; erection of 8No. Class B2 (light industrial) and Class B4 (storage/distribution) unit; extension to and subdivision of existing supermarket building to form 4. Class B4 units (existing retail use to be discontinued); erection of replacement supermarket; provision of new accesses, road improvements; car parking, landscaping and associated site works. (Lynas Food Outlet building to be retained) at No 46 Montgomery Road (former Hughes Christensen site) and between nos 44 and 46 Montgomery Road and no 41 Montgomery Road (Lidl)**

The Principal Planning officer provided the Members with an overview of the major application which comprised two sites either side of Montgomery Road and adjacent to the Castlereagh Road.

He advised the Members of the key issues in the assessment of the proposal, which included the principle of a major foodstore at that location; the loss of existing industrial land; design and layout considerations; impact on amenity / character of the area; impact on transport and other infrastructure and impact on the natural environment.

The Members were advised that the proposal constituted an increase of 397sqm of convenience and 198sqm of comparison floorspace on the existing store, which was to be relocated from its current location to the factory site to the north. The Principal planning officer explained that the site was outside any designated retail centres identified within both the BUAP and dBMAP.



He reported that, following assessment of the economic information, on balance, it was considered that the majority of trade would be drawn from unprotected locations and, as such, the scale of impact on protected centres was not likely to be significant.

At the time of writing the report, there were no sites available that could facilitate the proposal, largely due to the size of store proposed, and it therefore met the sequential test.

It was felt that the proposal would provide regeneration benefits in terms of restoring a vacant site to active economic use. He advised that it might provide substantial community benefits, including in terms of job creation and improved built form and associated public realm, if all the business units were to become operational on an ongoing basis.

The agent had indicated that the proposal would result in the following economic impacts:

- the construction costs of the entire project will be around £8million, which would be a significant benefit to the local construction industry;
- the proposed store would support 13 new jobs;
- the proposed Class B2 & B4 units had the potential to create 87 full time equivalent positions;
- there would be an increase in rates revenue for the Council of around £300,000+ per annum.

In order to secure the retention of business/industrial use at the site and to offset the loss of such uses in substitution for the proposed retail use, it was fundamental that the conversion works of the existing Lidl building were provided prior to the new supermarket use commencing. As highlighted in the BCC LDP response, it was necessary to secure that by planning agreement under Section 76 of the Planning Act. He added that it was also considered necessary to restrict permitted development use rights for the business/industrial units, in order that the Council could retain control of operations at the site and to maintain appropriate amenity via planning condition.

The Members were advised that all consultees had responded with no objections, apart from Invest NI who had not yet responded, despite numerous reminders having been issued.

The Members' attention was drawn to the Late Items pack, whereby the Council's Economic Development Unit had no objection. A response had also been received from the DFI Economics Branch, who had considered the "Development Appraisal and Viability Report" and the "Retail impact, Need and Assessment". The Principal Planning officer summarised their response and added that the Council's Estates Valuer had considered the issues and that an independent review of the retail figures had been undertaken by the Council's LDP team.

He reported that Environmental Health had made comments in relation to the Construction Management Plan, in terms of hours of construction, and that DFI Roads had responded to advise that Condition 19 was no longer necessary and, after discussion with the agent in regards to Conditions 20-23, officers were awaiting final conditions from Roads and could be amended following receipt of response. Delegated authority was therefore requested to finalise all conditions.

One objection had been received in relation to traffic and associated issues. He advised that DFI Roads had no objections in relation to those issues and, accordingly, any impacts were considered acceptable.

The Members of the Committee recommended that, in accordance with the Council decision of 4th May 2021, the Chief Executive would exercise her delegated authority to approve the application, to finalise the wording of conditions and to enter into a planning agreement under S76 of the Planning Act, subject to no new substantive planning issues being raised by consultees and third parties.

**LA04/2020/2071/F - Demolition of existing buildings and structures; and construction of 57 no. apartments with associated landscaping and car parking at 41-49 Tate's Avenue Belfast**

The Senior Planning officer drew the Members' attention to the Late Items Pack, where a letter had been received from Environmental Consultants providing further information on gas mitigation and points of clarification in response to Environmental Health concerns. He explained that the Environmental Health Department had since advised that it was content with the mitigation measures proposed.

The Members were also advised that the Social Housing element of the Section 76 Agreement had been omitted from the Committee Report. He outlined that a Section 76 clause would be applied, requiring 100% social housing provision which had meant a subsequent reduction in parking standards.

The Members were provided with the details of the application. They were advised of the key issues which had been considered during the assessment of the proposed development, including the acceptability of residential use at that location; demolition in an Area of Townscape Character (ATC); impact on the character and appearance of the ATC; Scale, Massing and Design; open space provision; traffic and parking; contamination; flooding and drainage; wastewater treatment and developer obligations.

The Senior Planning officer explained that the principle of demolition of the existing buildings and new residential development was acceptable given the extant permission on the site. The Members were advised that the additional 8 units proposed were located within the main block and had resulted in additional floorspace on the upper floor above the approved rear annex. The location of the additional mass ensured there would be no detrimental visual impact when viewed from the street. The minor elevation changes to the Tates Avenue elevation ensured that the proposal continued to enhance the character of the ATC.

He outlined that any additional windows were located so that separation distances and screening provided by the parts of the proposed building would ensure that there would be no impact on the amenity of neighbouring properties. He added that the removal of the balconies and expanses of glazing also improved the relationship with the adjacent properties, particularly those to either side on Tates Avenue.

In relation to car parking, he advised that 30 spaces were proposed in the basement, whereas 73 spaces had been proposed in the extant permission. He outlined that the reduction in spaces had been agreed between planners, DFI Roads and the planning agent, in light of the fact that the apartments would be social housing, where it was widely accepted that uptake of parking spaces was significantly less. A parking survey had been carried out which considered the uptake of car parking in similar sized social housing sites and had taken into account on-street parking availability (not on Tate's Avenue) as well as the site's proximity to the amenities on the Lisburn Road. A Travel Plan was also proposed including green travel measures such as Travel Cards for three years, a cycle user scheme and a subsidy towards a Car Club. He advised that DFI had advised that it was now content with the Travel Plan.

He reported that a response from NI Water was outstanding in relation to the capacity within the receiving wastewater treatment works. In the interim, and as a precaution, a condition had been proposed that would ensure that no development was carried out until such times as capacity became available.

The Members were advised that no objections had been received from third parties and that the Pre-Community Consultation Report submitted demonstrated that the applicant had carried out their duty under Section 27 of the Planning Act (NI) 2011 to consult the community in advance of submitting an application.

The proposal was assessed against paragraphs 4.23-4.29 of the SPPS and Policy QD1 of PPS7. He advised that the design of the proposed apartments fronting onto Tate's Avenue were traditional in appearance, in keeping with the built form of the immediate surrounding properties. He reported that the height of the new buildings followed the pattern of the existing streetscape in relation to the eaves/ridge height, window/door openings and building line. A more traditional design had been adopted along the Tate's Avenue elevation to respect the established vernacular and that relationship was considered appropriate in the context of the street scene on Tate's Avenue.

He outlined that there were more windows in the front elevation than the previous approval, which strengthened the vertical emphasis, arguably producing a more traditional solid: void ratio more in keeping with the area. Dormer windows were also proposed on the upper floor to match the original dormers found within the draft ATC.

The Members were advised that it was considered that the stepped heights proposed on Tate's Avenue was in keeping with the sloping nature of the site and generally accorded with the height of the existing built form of the area.

He explained that the proposal had been assessed against Policy OS2 of Planning Policy Statement 8 which stated that an area of at least 3,000 square metres (10% of the site area) should be given over to communal open space. He advised the Members that the area of open space provision amounted to approximately 1,000 square metres. He clarified that Creating Places stated that "In the case of apartment or flat developments, or 1 and 2 bedroomed houses on small urban infill sites, private communal open space would be acceptable in the form of landscaped areas, courtyards or roof gardens, from a minimum of 10 sq m per unit to around 30 sq m per unit." He advised the Members that it was considered that the site was an urban infill

site and, when the lower standard was applied, the level of communal amenity space would be 570 square metres. The proposed amenity provision was approximately 820 square metres and was therefore considered acceptable.

The Chairperson welcomed Mr. P. Stinson, agent, to the meeting. He confirmed that:

- the permission remained extant, having been granted in 2019;
- the proposal would comprise 31 active elderly units, along with 26 general needs units, and that an agreement in principle had been reached with a housing association; and
- they welcomed the recommendation that the social housing element would be included within the Section 76 Agreement.

In response to a Member's questions regarding the reduced number of car parking spaces, Mr. Stinson advised the Members that the decrease would mean that the construction would take less time and that the use of parking in social housing was significantly less than with other housing developments. In addition to the availability of on street parking nearby and the Green Travel Measures, DFI Roads were content with the results of the Travel Survey.

In response to a further question, the Senior Planning officer outlined that DFI Roads had verbally agreed to the measures proposed but that they were awaiting a final response. In relation to the outstanding Rivers Agency response, he explained that there was an extant approval on the site but that officers were awaiting a formal response.

The Members of the Committee recommended that, in accordance with the Council decision of 4th May 2021, the Chief Executive would exercise her delegated authority to approve the application and to finalise the conditions and the Section 76 Agreement.

**LA04/2020/1593/F - Refurbishment works to existing park, comprising: revised accesses from Jamaica Road and Old Park Road; extension of existing 3G pitch; refurbishment of existing flood lighting; a replacement 405m<sup>2</sup> GFA changing pavilion incorporating community facilities and a shelter for up to 101 spectators; new MUGA; new multi-use community event space; new street furniture, outdoor gym equipment and park lighting; new inclusive/multi-age playground; new 2.4m boundary fencing; rationalisation of existing path network including resurfacing; new SUDS pond/wetland wildlife area; landscape interventions including planting, woodland management, entrance improvements and all associated works at Marrowbone Millennium Park, Oldpark Road**

(Councillor Murphy, having declared an interest in this item, left the meeting for the duration of the item and did not participate in the vote.)

The Principal Planning officer presented the details of the Belfast City Council application to the Members.

The key issues which had been considered during its assessment included the principle of use on the site; the design and layout; the impact on amenity and character of the area; impact on natural and built heritage; access, movement, parking, transport and road safety; flood risk; landscaping and other environmental matters.

He outlined that the site was located within an existing public park facility and was identified as an "Area of Existing Open Space" within (Draft) Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan (BMAP) 2004 and BMAP 2015 and, "Lands reserved for Landscape Amenity or Recreation use" in the Belfast Urban Area Plan 2001 (BUAP). The application site was also within a Local Landscape Policy Area (LLPA) as per (Draft) BMAP 2004.

The Members were advised that the proposal had been assessed against and was considered to comply with the SPPS, BUAP 2001, Draft BMAP 2015, Planning Policy Statement 2, Planning Policy Statement 3, Planning Policy Statement 6, Planning Policy Statement 8, and Planning Policy Statement 15.

He reported that Environmental Health, Northern Ireland Water, BCC Tree Officers, BCC Parks and Recreation, DFI Roads Service, DFI Rivers Agency, Historic Environment Division (Historic Monuments), DAERA Water Management Unit, DAERA Regulation Unit and DAERA Natural Environment Division had raised no issues of concern, subject to conditions.

A Member asked for further information regarding the new inclusive, multi-age playground and whether it included a Changing Places facility. The Planning Manager advised the Members that while those were not planning considerations that he would ask the Physical Programmes Department to provide the Member with further information in relation to the facilities which were to be included.

The Members of the Committee recommended that, in accordance with the Council decision of 4th May 2021, the Chief Executive would exercise her delegated authority to approve the application and to finalise the wording of conditions.

**LA04/2020/0991/F - 3m high retaining wall and associated works at Colin Glen Forest Park 163 Stewartstown Road on lands north of Colin Glen Community Allotments opposite nos 27-29 Colinglen Road and accessed off Colinglen Road (Retrospective)**

(Councillor Murphy returned to the meeting at this point in proceedings)

The Members were provided with the details of the application which was in receipt of Council funding.

The retrospective application was for a retaining wall to facilitate the new Toboggan run development at the Forest Park. The Members were reminded that planning permission for the Toboggan run development had been granted in April 2019 (Ref: LA04/2018/2784/F).

The Members were advised that the site was currently designated as existing open space in the adopted Belfast Urban Area Plan (BUAP) 2001 and Draft BMAP. The use as open space would remain as existing with the retaining wall located along the approved Toboggan run.

The NIEA, Rivers Agency, and the Tree and Landscape team had been consulted. The Members were advised that NIEA had sought further information and, following the submission of this, had no concerns. The other consultees had no objections.

The Members of the Committee recommended that, in accordance with the Council decision of 4th May 2021, the Chief Executive would exercise her delegated authority to approve the application and to finalise the conditions.

**LA04/2020/2637/F - Single storey, stand-alone multi-purpose building and associated site works at Cregagh Primary School, Mount Merrion Drive**

The Members considered the details of the Primary School application whereby the Council would be providing funding for the proposal.

The Members were advised that the multi-purpose building would be a single storey with a flat roof and would comprise of two main rooms approx. 60sqm and 20sqm. Toilets and a storage area would be incorporated within the building. The associated site works included several raised planting beds and an area to be used as an outdoor playground for children.

The application had been neighbour notified and advertised in the local press and no letters of representation were received.

Environmental Health had been consulted and was content with the proposal, subject to an informative being placed on the decision relating to contaminated land. DfI Roads had also been consulted and had offered no objection to the proposal.

The Members noted that it had been assessed against and was considered to comply with the BUAP, Draft BMAP, and the SPPS, Addendum to PPS 6 and PPS 8.

The Members of the Committee recommended that, in accordance with the Council decision of 4th May 2021, the Chief Executive would exercise her delegated authority to approve the application and to finalise the conditions.

**LA04/2021/0696/F - Development of 'Active Travel Hub', which includes the installation of a 9m x 2.5m shipping container, with modifications to accommodate an internal bike store, and a small office on hard standing adjacent to the car park and entrance to Whiterock Leisure Centre**

The Members were provided with the details of the application, whereby the Council was the landowner. The proposal was in association with the under-noted

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proposal for a mounted sign on a shipping container, under reference LA04/2021/0718/A.

The proposed site was situated within Whiterock Leisure Centre and was designated as lands reserved for landscape, amenity or recreation use in the BUAP and as existing open space within both versions dBMAP and an urban landscape wedge.

The Members were advised that the proposals would complement the existing Leisure Centre and its recreational use and would comply with the relevant policy and area designations.

DFI Roads and Environmental Health had been consulted and had no objections and that no third party representations had been received.

The Members of the Committee recommended that, in accordance with the Council decision of 4th May 2021, the Chief Executive would exercise her delegated authority to approve the application and to finalise the conditions.

**LA04/2021/0718/A - Mounted sign on face of a shipping container at Whiterock Leisure Centre**

The Members were provided with the details of the application, whereby the Council was the landowner. The proposal was in association with the above-noted proposal for an active travel hub, under reference LA04/2021/0696/F.

The proposed site was situated within Whiterock Leisure Centre and was designated as lands reserved for landscape, amenity or recreation use in the BUAP and as existing open space within both versions dBMAP and an urban landscape wedge.

The Members noted that the proposed advertisement would respect the amenity of the surrounding area and would not prejudice public safety. DFI Roads had been consulted and had no objections and no third party representations had been received.

The Members of the Committee recommended that, in accordance with the Council decision of 4th May 2021, the Chief Executive would exercise her delegated authority to approve the application and to finalise the conditions.

**LA04/2021/0735/F - Extension of public pavement area to create additional space for social distancing, to include sheltered structures, seating, planters and elements of incidental play on 8-83 Adelaide Street**

The Members were provided with the details of the Belfast City Council application for temporary planning permission, of two years, for the extension of the public pavement area.

The site was located within the Linen Conservation Area and, overall, the proposal was thought to preserve the character and appearance of the area and would not be detrimental to the setting of nearby listed buildings, the amenity of neighbouring properties or harmful to highway safety.

The application had been neighbour notified and had been advertised in the local press. An objection had been received from the Department of Economy, raising concern over accessibility and loss of amenity.

The Historic Environment Division (HED), Environmental Health and the Conservation and Heritage officer had been consulted and offered no objections. Whilst there was an outstanding consultation response from DFI Roads, it had indicated there was no objection in principle, subject to detailed design drawings which were currently being reviewed by Roads.

The Members' attention was drawn to the Late Items report, where correspondence had been received from the Department for Communities, requesting further information on the footpath finishes and the management of street furniture. The Members were advised that the full specification was detailed on the plans and that the Council would maintain and manage all street furniture.

A Member stated that she found it surprising that the Department for the Economy had objected to the proposal.

The Members of the Committee recommended that, in accordance with the Council decision of 4th May 2021, the Chief Executive would exercise her delegated authority to approve the application and to finalise the conditions, subject to no objection from DFI Roads.

**LA04/2021/0544/F - Installation of 6 projector units to create an interactive lighting installation along the hoarding of Brunswick Street on 5-11 Brunswick Street**

The Members were provided with the details of the Belfast City Council application for a temporary period of two years. It formed part of a citywide lighting strategy, undertaken by the Council, to create more welcoming, vibrant and safer places.

The site was located within Belfast City Centre Conservation Area and, overall, the proposal was thought to enhance the character and appearance of the area and would not be detrimental to the amenity of neighbouring properties or harmful to highway safety.

The application had been neighbour notified and advertised in the local press and no comments were received. DFI Roads and Environmental Health had been consulted and had offered no objections to the proposal.



Whilst a consultation response from the Council's Conservation and Heritage officer was outstanding, it was not considered that it presented any issue of principle, as the proposal was similar to other projector units that had already been approved in the Conservation Area, under references LA04/2019/2385/F and LA04/2019/2386/F.

The proposal had been assessed against, and was considered to comply with, the SPPS, BUAP, Draft BMAP, PPS3 and PPS6.

The Members of the Committee recommend that, in accordance with the Council decision of 4th May 2021, the Chief Executive would exercise her delegated authority to approve the application and to finalise the conditions.

**LA04/2021/0394/F - Floodlights (10m high) and ancillary equipment. Installation of scoreboard & water sprinkler system, replacement paths & fittings around bowling green at Balmoral Bowling Club**

The Members were advised of the details of the Belfast City Council application.

The Members noted that the proposal involved the upgrade of an existing facility which would accord with one of the core planning objectives of the SPPS, to improve health and well-being. The proposal complied with Policy OS7 of PPS8.

Environmental Health was satisfied that the predicted level of light would not be obtrusive. DAERA Natural Environment Division was satisfied the floodlights would not harm bat or badger activity in the vegetated borders. Northern Ireland Electricity (NIE) had initially advised that they had concerns that the floodlights might interfere with nearby overhead lines, however the applicant had been in discussions with NIE who had since confirmed that the proposal met the clearance distances. On that basis, no issue was raised.

No third party representations had been received.

The Members of the Committee recommended that, in accordance with the Council decision of 4th May 2021, the Chief Executive would exercise her delegated authority to approve the application and to finalise the conditions.

Chairperson