

Development Management Officer Report Committee Application

Summary	
Committee Meeting Date: 18 th August 2026	
Application Reference: LA04/2026/0282/F & LA04/2026/0260/DCA	
Proposal: Renewal of application reference LA04/2020/0659/F - Refurbishment of existing four storey terrace including alteration, extension to rear, partial demolition and reinstatement. Part change of use from art galleries to two cafes at ground floor. Retention of offices within existing building at second, third and fourth floor. Erection of new 13 storey aparthotel building to rear and associated works including public realm improvements	Location: 29-33 Bedford Street, Belfast, BT2 7EJ
Referral Route: Major development	
Recommendation: Approval subject to conditions	
Applicant Name and Address: Andras House Ltd 60 Great Victoria Street Belfast BT2 7BB	Agent Name and Address: Clyde Shanks Ltd Second Floor 7 Exchange Place Belfast
Date Valid: 13.02.26	
Target Date: 11.09.26	
Contact Officer: Ed Baker, Planning Manager (Development Management)	
Executive Summary: The application is for the renewal of planning permission LA04/2020/0659/F, consisting of the restoration and demolition of portions of the terrace of 29-33 Bedford Street to create an entrance and thoroughfare to the back-land site wherein a 13 storey aparthotel is proposed. The application also seeks change of use from art galleries to two cafes at the ground floor. The offices within the existing buildings at second, third and fourth floor are to be retained. Public realm enhancements are proposed on the pavements outside 29-33 Bedford Street. Since the previous approval the Belfast Local Development Plan: Plan Strategy 2035 has been adopted. The main issues to be considered are: • Approach to assessing a renewal application • Principle of hotel and café use at this location • Economic benefits • Impact on built heritage and the principle of demolition in the conservation area • Scale, height, massing and design • Impact on traffic and parking • Impact on amenity	

- Climate change
- Promoting healthy communities
- Waste-water capacity
- Waste management
- Impact on human health
- Impact on the amenity of adjacent land users
- Developer Contributions
- Pre-Application Community Consultation

Notwithstanding the change to the policy framework through adoption of the Plan Strategy, the proposal is considered to remain acceptable.

No objections have been received from consultees, other from DfC HED which like the original application, is concerned about the height and scale of the proposed 13-storey apart-hotel at the rear of the site and its impact on the setting of Listed Buildings. Internal conservation advice also raises similar concerns.

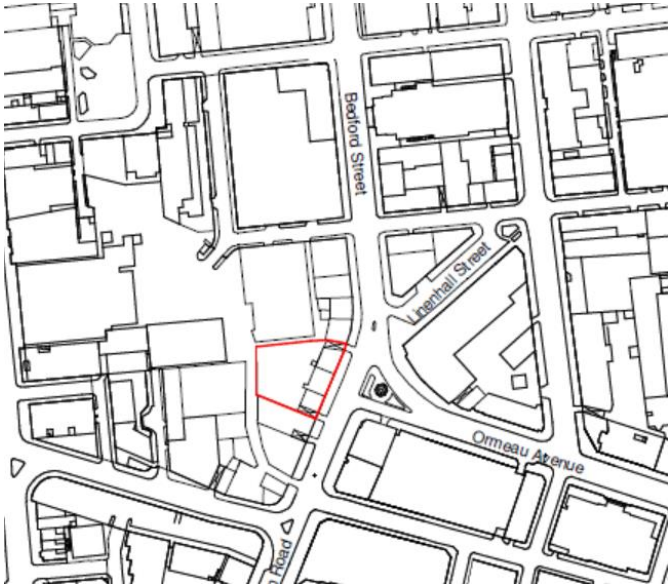
One representation has been received from the BBC, whose premises is opposite the site on Bedford Street and Ormeau Avenue and is concerned about noise conflict during construction and operation. The issues are addressed in the main report.

Recommendation

Having regard to the development plan and other material considerations, the proposal is considered acceptable. It is recommended that planning permission is granted subject to conditions.

Delegated authority is sought for the Director of Planning and Building Control to finalise the conditions and deal with any other matters that arise, provided they are not substantive.

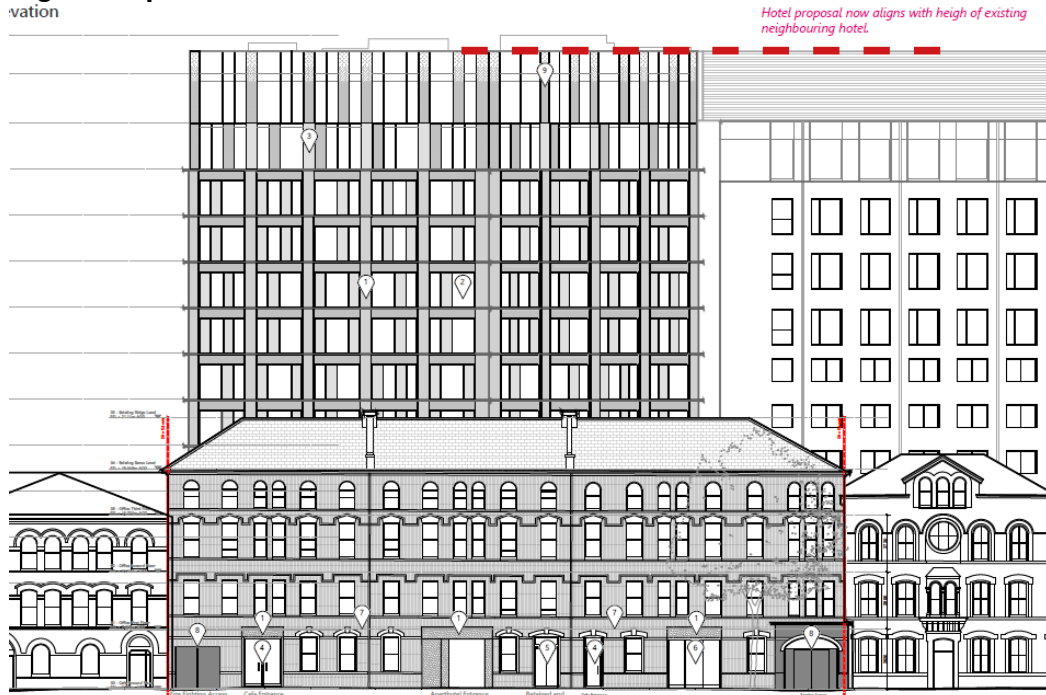
Since the application is to renew a previous planning permission, DfC HED's concerns are not considered a "significant objection" and it is therefore not considered necessary to notify the Department for Infrastructure under the Planning (Notification of Applications) Direction 2017.

Officer Report	
1.0	Drawings
1.1	Fig 1: Site Location Plan 
1.2	Fig 2: Proposed site Layout 

1.3

Fig 3: Proposed Elevation and CGI

vation



2.0	Characteristics of the Site and Area
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2.1	There are three existing terraced properties on the site comprising 4 storeys each. The terrace was constructed in approximately 1875.
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2.2	The site is located within the City Centre as defined by BUAP 2001 and draft BMAP and is within the Linen Conservation Area. The area is characterised by distinct warehouse architecture. Whilst there are varying heights within the locality, the area is notable for its rhythm of bays, fine facades, vertical expression to bays and openings, a high solid to void ratio and a broken roof silhouette.
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2.3	Bedford Street comprises a diverse set of uses ranging from offices to retail, restaurants and pubs as well as hotels and the Ulster Hall.
3.0	Description of Proposal
3.1	The applications seek planning permission and Conservation Area Consent (DCA) for demolition of portions of the terrace of 29-33 Bedford Street to create an entrance and thoroughfare to the rear of the site where a 13-storey aparthotel is proposed, and refurbishment of the terrace. The planning application also seeks part change of use from art galleries to two cafes at ground floor. The offices within the existing buildings at second, third and fourth floor are to be retained.
3.2	The proposals will remove previous unsympathetic interventions to the terrace which will improve its external appearance by utilising restored brick and a commonality of finish.
3.3	The proposed aparthotel to the rear comprises 13 storeys which along with the 1.5m extended parapet (to assist in screening rooftop plant) rising to a total of 41.5m in height. The overall height aligns with the upper height of the plant enclosure on the adjacent Moxey hotel building.
3.4	The façade of the hotel building has been designed with an offset rhythm of fenestration with horizontal banding. Large expansive glazing has been applied to corner units. There is a consistent bronze tone to metal and back painted glass panelling across the façade as well as perforated panelling on the upper two floors. This is further reflected in bronze panelling reinstatement works in the front terrace.
4.0	Planning Policy and Relevant Planning History
4.1	Development Plan – operational policies Belfast Local Development Plan, Plan Strategy 2035
4.2	Development Plan – zoning, designations and proposals maps Belfast Urban Area Plan (2001) BUAP Draft Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan 2015 (v2004) Draft Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan 2015 (v2014)
4.3	Regional Planning Policy Regional Development Strategy 2035 (RDS) Strategic Planning Policy Statement for Northern Ireland (SPPS)
4.4	Supplementary Planning Guidance Placemaking and Urban Design Tall Buildings Masterplanning Approach for Major Development Retail and Main Town Centre Uses Evening and Nighttime Economy Transportation Waste Infrastructure Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems Development Viability SPG
4.5	Other Policies Developer Contribution Framework (BCC) Creating Places (DfI) Belfast Agenda

4.6	Relevant Planning History LA04/2020/0659/F Proposal: Refurbishment of existing four storey terrace including alteration, extension to rear, partial demolition and reinstatement. Part change of use from art galleries to two cafes at ground floor. Retention of offices within existing building at second, third and fourth floor. Erection of new 13 storey aparthotel building to rear and associated works including public realm improvements [Amended Scheme] Address: 29-33 Bedford Street, Belfast Decision: Permission Granted Decision Date: 16.02.2021 LA04/2020/0669/DCA Proposal: Partial demolition of the existing terrace building along with the toilet block to the rear. Demolition will also include the raised access floor throughout terraces 31-33 Bedford Street. Address: 29-33 Bedford Street, Belfast Decision: Permission Granted Decision Date: 19.02.2021 Z/2006/2729/F Proposal: Demolition of existing 10 pin bowling alley and erection of new mixed use development, comprising hotel and office use. Amendment to previous approval Z/2005/0692/F Address: Superbowl, 4 Clarence Street West, Town Parks, Belfast, BT02 7GP Decision: Permission Granted Decision Date: 23.03.2007 Z/2005/0848/DCA Proposal: Demolition of existing 10 pin bowling alley to facilitate erection of new mixed-use development Address: 4 Clarence Street West, Town Parks, Belfast, Northern Ireland, BT02 7GP Decision: Permission Granted Decision Date: 31.10.2006 Z/2005/0692/F Proposal: Demolition of existing 10 pin bowling alley and erection of new mixed use development, comprising of a hotel and office use. (Amended P1 Form) Address: 4 Clarence Street West, Town Parks, Belfast, Northern Ireland, BT02 7GP Decision: Permission Granted Decision Date: 31.10.2006
5.0	Consultations and Representations
5.1	Statutory Consultations DfI Roads – No objection subject to conditions DfI Rivers – No objection NI Water – No objection DAERA NIEA – No objection subject to conditions DfC Historic Environment Division – Object to the overall height of the proposal.
5.2	Non-Statutory Consultations BCC Environmental Health – No objection subject to conditions BCC Conservation Advice – Objection to the height and massing of the new build BCC Urban Design Officer – No objection

5.3	Representations The application has been advertised and neighbours notified. The Council has received one objection. This is addressed in the main assessment below.
6.0	PLANNING ASSESSMENT Development Plan Context
6.1	Section 6(4) of the Planning (Northern Ireland) Act 2011 states that in making any determinations under the Act, regard is to be had to the local development plan, and the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
6.2	Section 45(1) of the Act states that in determining planning applications, the Council must have regard to the local development plan, so far as material to the application, and to any other material considerations.
6.3	The Belfast Local Development Plan (LDP) when fully completed will replace the Belfast Urban Area Plan 2001 as the statutory Development Plan for the city. The Belfast LDP will comprise two parts. Part 1 is the Plan Strategy, which contains strategic and operational policies and was adopted on 02 May 2023. Part 2 is the Local Policies Plan, which will provide the zonings and proposals maps for Belfast and has not yet been published. The zonings and proposals maps in the Belfast Urban Area Plan 2001 ("Departmental Plan") remain part of the statutory local development plan until the Local Policies Plan is adopted.
6.4	Proposals maps – the following zonings and designations apply: • Belfast Urban Area Plan 2001 – un-zoned "white land" • Draft Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan 2015 (v2004) – City Centre and Linen Conservation Area • Draft Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan 2015 (v2014) – City Centre and Linen Conservation Area
6.5	Operational policies – the Plan Strategy contains a range of operational policies relevant to consideration of the application. These are listed below. • Policy DES1 – Principles of urban design • Policy DES2 – Masterplanning approach for major development • Policy DES3 – Tall Buildings • Policy TRAN1 – Active Travel • Policy TRAN2 – Creating an accessible environment • Policy TRAN3 – Transport Assessment • Policy TRAN4 – Travel Plan • Policy TRAN8 – Car parking and servicing arrangements • Policy ENV1 – Environmental quality • Policy ENV2 – Mitigating environmental change • Policy ENV3 – Adapting to environmental change • Policy ENV4 – Flood Risk • Policy ENV5 – SuDS • Policy BH1 – Listed Buildings • Policy BH2 – Conservation Areas • Policy HOU13 – Short-term let accommodation • Policy TLC1 – Supporting tourism, leisure and cultural development • Policy TLC3 – Overnight visitor accommodation

	• Policy TLC4 – Evening and night-time economy • Policy HC1 – Promoting healthy communities
6.6	Proposals Maps – until such time as the Local Policies Plan is adopted, the Council must have regard to the land-use zonings, designations and proposals maps in the Belfast Urban Area Plan 2001, both versions of the draft Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan (v2004 and v2014) (draft BMAP 2015) and other relevant area plans. The weight to be afforded to these proposals maps is a matter for the decision maker. It is considered that significant weight should be given to the proposals map in draft BMAP 2015 (v2014) given its advanced stage in the development process, save for retail policies that relate to Sprucefield which remain contentious. <u>Approach to assessing a renewal application</u>
6.7	As this application seeks renewal of the original permissions (LA04/2020/0659/F and LA04/2020/0669/DCA), the key issue is whether there have been any material changes in circumstance that would lead the Council to a different decision. The principal change in circumstance is the adoption of the Belfast Local Development Plan: Plan Strategy 2035 and publication of associated Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG), and a new planning policy framework needs to be applied. <u>Principle of hotel and café use at this location</u>
6.8	The SPPS advises that planning permission ought to be granted for sustainable development that accords with the area plan and causes no harm to areas of acknowledged importance.
6.9	The proposal is for commercial and tourism uses. The SPPS refers to tourism infrastructure provision within paragraphs 6.251 - 6.266. The SPPS aims to facilitate sustainable tourism development in an environmentally sensitive manner, contribute to the growth of the regional economy by facilitating tourism growth and utilise and develop the tourism potential of settlements by facilitating tourism development of an appropriate nature, location and scale. It is noted that the tourism objectives of the SPPS also correlate with the Belfast Agenda which seeks to improve the provision of appropriate tourism infrastructure of various types to maximise the tourism potential of the city.
6.10	The proposed aparthotel is situated within the City Centre. It is considered that an aparthotel and associated cafes would contribute to the vibrancy of the area and local economy. In consideration of the Plan Strategy, the principle of the uses are in line with Policy TLC3 of the Plan Strategy which states planning permission will be granted for development proposals for new overnight visitor accommodation and town centres uses within the city centre boundary.
6.11	As per paragraph 7.1.83 of the Plan Strategy, Policy HOU 13 Short-term let accommodation applies to the proposed aparthotel. It states that planning permission will be granted for short-term let accommodation where set criteria are met. It is considered that criteria (a) to (e) are met, whilst (f) is not applicable. In regard to (d), a condition is recommended to secure an appropriate management plan.
6.12	A planning condition is also recommended to ensure that the apart-hotel cannot be used as long-term residential accommodation as the proposal has not been assessed against the relevant policies for residential accommodation standards and may be inappropriate for such use.

6.13	In accordance with Policies EC1, TLC1 and TLC4, the proposed development will support the growth of the tourism and hospitality sector in the city, help grow the evening/night-time economy and contribute to the supply of overnight visitor accommodation. Policy TLC3 states that planning permission will be granted for development proposals for new overnight visitor accommodation within the City Centre. <u>Economic Benefits</u>
6.14	Policy EC1 Delivering Inclusive Economic Growth, states that development of business sectors with strong growth potential in Belfast will be supported subject to normal planning considerations, the sectors include hospitality and tourism.
6.15	The proposal will generate an estimated 216 direct construction jobs, 129 indirect construction jobs and an economic output (GVA) of £27.6m throughout the construction period. In addition, the proposal will generate an estimated 116 full-time equivalent jobs once operational. These are material considerations that support the granting of planning permission. <u>The impact of the proposal on the City Centre Conservation Area and surrounding listed assets</u>
6.16	Section 104 of the Planning (NI) Act 2011 advises that where any area is for the time being designated as a conservation area, special regard must be had to the desirability of (a) preserving the character or appearance of that area in cases where an opportunity for enhancing its character or appearance does not arise; or (b) enhancing the character or appearance of that area in cases where an opportunity to do so does arise.
6.17	The House of Lords in the <i>South Lakeland</i> case decided that the 'statutorily desirable object of preserving the character or appearance of an area is achieved either by a positive contribution to preservation or by development which leaves character or appearance unharmed, that is to say preserved.' Partial demolition to the terrace buildings
6.18	In assessing the contribution of the existing buildings to the character or appearance of the Conservation Area, regard is had to the conservation area guidance.
6.19	The Linen Conservation Area Guide was published in 1992 and makes reference to the part the linen industry played in the development of Belfast. It states that redevelopment is not precluded but that refurbishment and conversion of existing properties will be particularly encouraged in the case of characteristic buildings which are important in the street-scene. It also states an aim to bring derelict or under-used buildings back into economic use.
6.20	Policy BH2 states that demolition of buildings in a conservation area, listed and non listed will only be permitted where it makes either a negative or no material contribution to the character and appearance of the area and the design quality of the proposed is considered to enhance the overall character of the conservation area paying due regard to viability of retention or restoration of the existing building.
6.21	The existing terrace buildings on Bedford Street make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. The scheme proposes to retain the majority of the existing brickwork and remedy earlier unsympathetic works to the terrace. There are three new doors proposed and there is proposed refurbishment to windows, doors and gates along the terrace. The most notable intervention to the existing terrace is the introduction of a "punch through" entrance to the hotel, creating a new entry.

6.22	The conservation advice response received for this renewal application provided no direct response to the proposed partial demolition. However, given that this application replicates the proposed partial demolition within the previous application it is worth reconsidering the advice from conservation received for the previous approval: <i>'The interventions at ground floor level would be considered minimal with the majority of the façade being retained and/or refurbished, thereby maintaining its value and positive contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area.'</i>
6.23	It is considered that the proposals affecting the existing four storey historic terrace are sensitive and considerate in nature and result in an understated yet contextually appropriate reinstatement that will result in a good neighbour to both listed buildings that bookend the application site. Whilst the scheme in its totality, including the proposed 13-storey new build apart-hotel at the rear, is considered to preserve the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, rather than enhance it, this is considered acceptable in this case given the limited nature of the partial demolition and its facilitation of the broader development with its resultant benefits.
6.24	Given the above conclusions, it is not considered necessary for the applicant to provide a viability case to justify the partial demolition or consider alternative uses of the building which could prevent the partial demolition.
6.25	It is considered that the proposed demolition is acceptable having regard to Policy BH2 and relevant provisions of the SPPS.
	Design, Placemaking and impact on the Conservation Area
6.26	Regard is had to the SPPS and Policy BH2. Policy BH2 details criteria for new development in the Conservation Area. This policy contains a number of criteria which are applied to proposals in the conservation area. For ease of reference, the works to the terrace and new build will be considered in turn under each criterion. a. The character and appearance of the area is preserved or enhanced; b. The development respects the built form of the area by way of height, scale, form, legibility, materials and detailing; c. Key views within, into or out of the area are not negatively impacted; d. Trees, archaeological or other landscape features contributing to the character or appearance of the area are protected and / or integrated in an appropriate manner; and e. Regard is given to relevant supplementary planning guidance. f. Extensions shall be subservient to the existing building with regard to height, scale, massing, form and alignment; g. The proposal involves retention of and where possible reinstatement of traditional features; h. The proposal will not result in the detrimental loss of visual gaps between existing buildings and boundaries; and i. The proposal makes use of traditional and where appropriate reclaimed, recycled/or sympathetic building materials and techniques which match or are in keeping with those found on the building and surrounding area.
6.27	The refurbishment of the existing terrace – as discussed above, the demolition, interventions and proposed changes to the terrace are considered appropriate. Given the current unsympathetic interventions of earlier times, the proposed scheme will bring a commonality of brick finish to the terrace, a more vibrant land-use and retention of the traditional entries. It is therefore considered that these proposals will be an enhancement.

6.28	The materials and interventions were redesigned to include sympathetic materials which would improve key views within, into and out of the area. The Linen Conservation Area guidance document states that <i>“new development should maintain or restore the Bedford Street frontage in terms of building height, massing and scale”</i> , as the four storey terrace is being retained and refurbished, this will maintain the frontage.
6.29	The new build aparthotel – the proposed aparthotel to the rear comprises 13 storeys that rises to a total of 41.5m in height. This height aligns with the upper height of the plant enclosure on the adjacent hotel building. The façade of the hotel building has been designed with an offset rhythm of fenestration with horizontal banding. Large expansive glazing has been applied to corner units. There is a consistent bronze tone to metal and back painted glass panelling across the façade as well as perforated panelling on the upper two floors. This is further reflected in bronze panelling reinstatement works in the front terrace.
6.30	The conservation advice is similar to that provided for the original approved application with primary concerns remaining with <i>‘the height of the rear block within the Conservation Area generally and in a subservient space contrary to the character of the area and its hierarchy of place.’</i>
6.31	However, the Council’s Urban Design Officer is content that if the proposal remains unchanged from the previous approval, his previous comments still applying to the renewal application: <i>‘when viewed in elevation, the new build to the rear rises approximately seven storeys above the ridge line of the existing four storey terrace, however in reality this would only be discernible from selected long range views such as west along Ormeau Avenue. For those mid and short range views along Bedford Street and Dublin Road the number of storeys visible would be less given the extent of screening afforded by the existing four storey terrace coupled with the depth of setback/offset from the rear of the terrace itself (an area utilised as a courtyard)’</i> .
6.32	The adjacent Moxy Hotel is an existing feature of the site context and part of the character and appearance of the conservation area and it provides a backdrop of the terrace in this location especially when viewed from Ormeau Avenue.
6.33	There are four key views including Ormeau Avenue, Bruce Street, Dublin Road and Bedford Street. The building will no longer be visible from Bruce Street (outside the conservation area) given the recent completion of the Vita student accommodation block. From within Bedford Street there are short and long views. Short views are prevented due to the four storey terrace. Long views are prevented in part from the adjacent hotel building and the elbow joint nature of the façade. Bedford Street is characterised by many differing building heights ranging from the likes of the subject terrace to the Grand Central Hotel with intermediate heights such as the adjacent hotel and the invest NI building. The building would however be particularly visible from the opposite side of Bedford Street and indeed Ormeau Avenue. In these two key views the existing Moxy Hotel is already a prominent feature and the proposed development will abut it and read with it.
6.34	The Linen Conservation Area document contains development guidelines which state that: • new development should relate sympathetically to the immediate surroundings. The Linen Conservation Area document makes reference to opportunities for public realm enhancement (new paving, seating, lighting and planting etc.) and the proposal includes new public realm improvements around the building including new paving and landscaping.
6.35	It is considered that the proposals are consistent with the guidance.

6.36	In conclusion, Policy BH2 has been assessed with input from the internal conservation advice, Urban Design Officer and HED. When considered in conjunction with the site context, the proposed works to the front terrace, the public realm improvements and specific backdrop of the adjacent hotel, officers consider that the proposal would, on balance, preserve the character of the Conservation Area.
6.36	The proposal is considered acceptable having regard to Policies DES1, DES2, DES3, BH2, relevant guidance and SPG, and provisions of the SPPS.
	<u>The impact of the proposal on nearby Listed Buildings</u>
6.37	Policy BH1 of the Plan Strategy relates to development affecting the setting of a listed building. There are several listed buildings/structures of special architectural and historic interest in the immediate vicinity of the site: • Morrison's Lounge Bar 21 Bedford Street – Grade B2 • 23 Bedford Street Belfast – Grade B2 • Pizza Express 25 Bedford Street – Grade B2 • Wetherspoons, The Bridge House, 35 – 37 Bedford Street – Grade B2 • BBC Broadcasting House Ormeau Avenue Belfast – Grade B1 • The Thompson Memorial Fountain Ormeau Avenue Belfast – Grade B1
6.38	DfC HED has been consulted. The proposal is assessed against Policy BH1 as follows. a. The development is sympathetic to the essential characteristic, scale, height, massing and alignment of the listed building by way of its scale, form, materials and detailing;
6.39	The refurbishment of the existing terrace – HED considers that the proposals for the existing 4 storey terrace are sympathetic and in keeping with the historic character of the area and consider this element of the proposal satisfies BH1 of the Plan Strategy subject to requested conditions.
6.40	The new build aparthotel – however, HED has concerns about the height and scale of the 13-storey new build apart-hotel. HED <i>‘...welcomes the revised alignment and the increased separation distance between the historic terrace and the tall element of the design within the previous scheme. Whilst efforts to address issues raised in the previous approved scheme are recognised, it is our view the proposed 13 storey tower element remains too tall. HED (Historic Buildings) considers this building would dominate the terrace and compromise the setting of the listed buildings by becoming a competing focus’</i> .
6.41	HED considers that materials in-keeping with the surrounding context would be more appropriate on this site and suggest that brick is considered for use on the tall building with a lightweight/permeable design for the upper 2/3 levels; which may help the development to integrate better with the historic character of the area.
6.42	It states that if the Council is minded to approve the application that the following conditions be included: 1. Material finishes to the new build development shall be non-reflective, such as brick. Samples shall be provided on site showing alternative options indicating colour, texture face-bond; pointing mortar mix, joint thickness and finish profile, and agreed in writing with council and HED prior to works commencing on site.

	2. Window materials shall be aluminium or bronze. A full size sample shall be provided on site indicating the colour, texture the actual glazing material and panes, colour and finish shall be submitted to and agreed in writing with council and HED prior to works commencing on site. 3. The mechanical and ventilation plant equipment shall be incorporated into the overall design of the façade and screened from view.
6.43	However, officers advise that it is not possible to change the materials or design as this is a renewal application. The Council is required to assess the original scheme. The design concept is that it is lightweight, permeable presence as a back-land development. It is however intended that the conditions to be included with the permission which require full sample panels of all proposed materials to be agreed in consultation with HED in advance. It is considered that the proposed palette of materials is acceptable and will provide for a building that is in the councils view not dominant relative to the listed buildings given the current context of surrounding buildings, specifically the height of the existing Moxy Hotel. The proposal will contrast positively with the existing terrace.
6.44	Officers remain of the opinion that the scale and height of the 13-storey new build apart-hotel is appropriate and would not be harmful to the setting of Listed Buildings, bearing in mind the context of the site as described previously. b. The development does not result in the significant loss of key views of the listed building;
6.45	It is not considered that the refurbished terrace or the new building to the rear of the site will result in loss of keys views to the surrounding listed buildings. c. The nature of the use proposed respects the character of the setting of the building;
6.46	The current listed buildings are in use as public houses, restaurants and offices. It is considered that there is no conflict between the existing and proposed uses that would harm the setting of the Listed Buildings. d. The development does not have a detrimental impact on the setting of the listed building; and
6.47	As already discussed above, it is considered that the proposed scheme is acceptable and will provide for a building that is not dominant relative to the listed buildings and will therefore not be detrimental to the setting of the existing listed buildings. e. The development has regard to relevant supplementary planning guidance.
6.48	The proposal has regard to the Linen Conservation Area Design Guide as discussed throughout this report. Archaeology
6.49	DfC HED: Historic Monuments Unit (HMU) has been consulted and has considered the impacts of the proposal on archaeology. HMU is content and the proposal is considered to accord with Policy BH5 and relevant provisions of the SPPS.

	<u>Impact on traffic and parking</u>
6.50	The site is a very accessible location within the City Centre with excellent access to public transport and existing public car parks.
6.51	In assessing the proposal DfI Roads has considered the Transport Assessment Form and a Travel Plan.
6.52	The submitted Travel Plan outlines the sustainable location of the proposal within an area of parking restraint and sets out opportunities for public transport, access by bicycle and on foot as well as the strategic aim of reducing private car use.
6.53	DFI Roads have no objections subject to conditions regarding cycle parking and compliance with the Service Management Plan and Travel Plan. These conditions are recommended.
6.54	The proposal is considered to comply with Policy TRAN1, TRAN3, TRAN4 and TRAN8.
	<u>Climate change</u>
6.55	The proposal is for the refurbishment of an existing building and therefore avoids full demolition, in compliance with Policy ENV2.
6.56	The application is supported by a Climate Change Statement but this only addresses SuDS (Policy ENV5). Policy DES2 requires a masterplanning approach and that Major developments are constructed to BREEAM Excellent standard or equivalent. A condition is necessary to secure appropriate energy efficiency measures including the energy performance of the buildings, potential renewables etc.
6.57	With regards to SuDS, the submitted drainage strategy statement states that the primary SuDS method proposed is through underground attenuation within the site. The proposed courtyard and covered walkway include planters, trees and hedging offering an element of open and green space will also contribute to sustainable drainage.
6.58	Subject to conditions, it is considered that the proposal is acceptable, having regard to Policy ENV2, ENV3 and ENV5.
	<u>Promoting healthy communities</u>
6.59	The site is a central and sustainable location with opportunities for active travel. The scheme is considered to be of a good quality design and would provide an attractive and pleasant environment for people to visit and work in. The proposal is considered acceptable having regard to Policy HC1.
	<u>Waste-water capacity</u>
6.59	NI Water confirms that there is available waste-water infrastructure capacity as offers no objection to the proposal.
	<u>Waste management</u>
6.60	As per the guidelines in Table 2 of the 'Waste Storage Guide for Northern Ireland, the proposed development is required to provide a minimum storage capacity of two days' waste for the proposed collection frequency of 6 days per week. The use of 1,100 litre Euro Bins is considered the most efficient method of storage and disposal of the refuse generated by the development.

6.61	The proposed development provides a bin storage area capable of storing 13 No. 1,100 litre Euro Bins. The bin storage area has been located in an easily accessible location for building staff and will use the 'Service Access' for collection. The travel route from the bin storage area to the roadside collection point is low gradient.
6.62	It is considered that the waste management strategy of the site is acceptable.
	<u>Contaminated Land</u>
6.63	The application is supported by a Generic Quantitative Risk Assessment (GQRA) which is found to be acceptable by the Council's Environmental Health (EH) team. The conditions advised by EH are recommended.
6.64	The proposal is considered acceptable, having regard to Policy ENV1.
	<u>Noise and Vibration</u>
6.65	EH does not raise concerns regarding noise and recommends that potential noise impacts are dealt with by way of condition, including the requirement for a Final Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP). These conditions are recommended.
6.66	The proposal is considered acceptable, having regard to Policy ENV1.
	<u>Air Quality</u>
6.67	EH is content with the air quality information provided with the application, which demonstrates that the impact of emissions from the proposed heating system and transport sources will not be significant on local air quality.
6.68	The proposal is considered acceptable, having regard to Policy ENV1.
	<u>Flood Risk</u>
6.69	DFI Rivers was consulted and confirms that the application site does not fall within any designated flood plains or water courses.
6.70	The proposal is considered acceptable with regard to flood risk and drainage, having regard to Policy ENV4 and associated SPG.
	<u>The impact on the amenity of adjacent land users</u>
6.71	The site is located within the commercial core bounded by commercial, office, and hospitality uses. It is not considered that the proposed use would have a negative impact on adjacent land uses.
6.72	A number of supporting documents have been submitted in support of the proposal, including a Noise Impact Assessment. The Council's Environmental Health (EH) team is content that the proposal will not have an unacceptable adverse impact in terms of odour or noise subject to appropriate conditions.
6.73	An objection has been received from the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), the occupier of Broadcasting House, 25 Ormeau Avenue. This focuses on noise at construction and operational phase, stating that <i>'construction activities associated with the proposed development, together with noise from plant and machinery once</i>

	<i>operational, have the potential to adversely affect broadcasting and transmission functions.'</i>
6.74	In terms of construction, a Final Construction Environmental Management Plan is recommended by condition. In view of Environmental Health's advice, and subject to conditions, it is considered that there would be no unacceptable noise impacts when the building is operational. The proposal is considered compliant with Policy ENV1.
6.75	There are also no concerns in relation to overlooking, overshadowing or natural light. Therefore, compliant with Policy DES1.
	<u>Developer Contributions</u>
6.77	Para 5.69 of the SPPS states that ' <i>Planning authorities can require developers to bear the costs of work required to facilitate their development proposals.</i> '
6.78	The <i>Developer Contributions Framework</i> published by Belfast City Council in January 2020 sets out the circumstances whereby mitigation or management of the impacts of new development is required.
6.79	In this case the applicant is proposing a developer contribution in the form of public realm improvements along the site frontage on Bedford Street. These will be secured by a planning condition.
6.80	In the previous application, the Council's City Regeneration and Development team welcomed the public realm improvements.
6.81	In response to the original application, the Council's Economic Development Unit advised that there was no requirement for specific Employability and Skills measures. No specific interventions are therefore proposed.
	<u>Pre-Application Community Consultation</u>
6.82	For applications that fall within the major category as prescribed in the Development Management Regulations, Section 27 of the Planning Act (NI) 2011 places a statutory duty on applicants for planning permission to consult the community in advance of submitting an application.
6.83	Section 27 also requires that a prospective applicant, prior to submitting a major application must give notice, known as a 'Proposal of Application Notice' (PAN) that an application for planning permission for the development is to be submitted. LA04/2019/2128/PAN was submitted to the Council on 10 th September 2019 and was deemed to be acceptable on 20 th September 2019.
6.64	Where pre-application community consultation has been required and a PAN has been submitted at least 12 weeks in advance of the application being submitted, the applicant must prepare a pre-application community consultation report (PACC) to accompany the planning application. A PACC Report was submitted support of the renewal application which includes details of the public event, newspaper advertising and leaflets. No responses were received and there was no attendance at the public event.

7.0	Recommendation
7.1	Having regard to the development plan and other material considerations, the proposal is considered acceptable. It is recommended that planning permission is granted subject to conditions.
7.2	Delegated authority is sought for the Director of Planning and Building Control to finalise the conditions and deal with any other matters that arise, provided they are not substantive.
7.3	Since the application is to renew a previous planning permission, DfC HED's concerns are not considered a "significant objection" and it is therefore not considered necessary to notify the Department for Infrastructure under the Planning (Notification of Applications) Direction 2017.

DRAFT CONDITIONS for LA04/2026/0282/F

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of 5 years from the date of this permission.

Reason: As required by Section 61 of the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011.

2. Notwithstanding the Planning (Use Classes) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015 and Planning (General Permitted Development) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015 (or any order revoking and/or re-enacting those orders with or without modification), the aparthotel shall not be used other than as short term accommodation. The maximum stay by an occupant shall be no more than 90 days within any 12 month period, in accordance with written records which shall be made available to the Council at all reasonable times.

Reason: Residential use of the building would require further consideration by the Planning Authority having regard to the Local Development Plan and relevant material considerations.

3. The aparthotel hereby approved shall not operate unless in accordance with a Management Plan, details of which shall have first been submitted to and approved in writing by the Council.

Reason: In the interests of the amenities of the area.

4. Prior to the operation of the approved development, a Verification Report shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Council. This report must demonstrate that the remediation measures outlined in the RPS Ireland Ltd report entitled 'Andras House Ltd, Environmental site Assessment and Generic Quantitative Risk Assessment, No. 29-33 Bedford Street, Belfast' (dated 26th August 2020 and referenced 602158-R1 (03)) have been implemented. The Verification Report shall be completed by competent persons and demonstrate the successful completion of the remediation works and that the site is now fit for end-use (commercial). It must demonstrate that the identified human health contaminant linkages are effectively broken. The Verification Report shall be in accordance with current Environment Agency and CIRIA guidance and British Standards. In particular, the Verification Report must demonstrate that:

The final site layout is as per Todd Architects drawing of the RSK Environment Ltd report entitled 'Andras House Ltd, Environmental Site Assessment and Generic Quantitative Risk Assessment, No. 29-33 Bedford Street, Belfast, 602158-R1 (03)', dated 26th August 2020. Figure 3. Drawing No. BS-TOD-ZZ-00-DR-A-200002 (Revision 2), Drawing title 'Proposed Ground Floor Plan'.

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

5. If during the carrying out of the development, new contamination is encountered that has not previously been identified, all related development works shall cease, and the Council shall be notified immediately in writing. No further related development works shall proceed until this new contamination has been fully investigated in accordance with current Environment Agency and CIRIA guidance and British Standards.

In the event of unacceptable human health risks being identified, a Remediation Strategy shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Council. The Remediation Strategy shall be implemented and subsequently a Verification Report shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Council prior to the development being occupied or operated. The Verification Report shall be completed by competent persons and demonstrate the successful completion of the remediation works and that the site is now fit for end-use. The Verification Report shall be in accordance with current Environment Agency and CIRIA guidance and British standards.

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

6. The rating level (dBLAr,T) from the operation of all combined plant and equipment associated with the hereby approved development must not exceed the existing daytime and night-time background sound levels at the nearest noise sensitive premises, when measured or determined in accordance with BS4142:2014+A1:2019 'Methods for rating and assessing industrial and commercial sound' at any time.

- Amplified music shall not be played within the Court Yard Area between 23:00 hrs and 07:00 hrs.
- There shall be no commercial deliveries to the ground floor cafés/coffee shops between 23.00 hrs and 07:00 hrs.

Reason: To safeguard the amenity of occupants of the building hereby

7. The development hereby permitted shall not be occupied until any necessary sound mitigation measures are installed so that the below internal noise levels are not exceeded within habitable rooms. Where closed windows are required to achieve these internal levels then an alternative means of ventilation must be provided which meets, as a minimum, the sound reduction performance required by the windows. In the case of active or mechanical ventilation the applicant must ensure that the operation of the ventilation system does not result in internal noise in excess of the below stated levels:

-35 dB LAeq,16hrs at any time between 07:00hrs and 23:00hrs within any habitable room, if required with the windows closed and alternative means of acoustic ventilation provided.

- 30 dB LAeq,8hr at any time between the hours of 23:00hrs and 07:00hrs within any bedroom, if required with the windows closed and alternative means of acoustic ventilation provided.

- 45 dB LAmax more than 10 times between 23:00hrs and 07:00hrs within any bedroom, if required with the windows closed and alternative means of ventilation provided.

-The measures required shall be thereafter retained at all times.

Reason: To safeguard the amenity of occupants of the building hereby approved.

8. No cooking/heating of foods shall be permitted within the hereby permitted café/coffee shops associated with the proposal.

Reason: Protection of nearby amenity

9. The dust management measures, as detailed within the Chapter 6.2.6 of the Irwin Carr Consultant report entitled 'Air Quality and Noise Impact Assessment, Bedford Yard, Bedford Street, Belfast Rp001 2018104 (Bedford Yard)', dated 18/09/2020 shall be implemented throughout the duration of the construction phase of the development.

Reason: Protection of human health.

10. Prior to commencement of development on site, including demolition, site clearance or site preparation, a Final Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) shall be produced by the appointed contractor. The CEMP shall include measures to control noise, dust and vibration during the demolition / construction phase, demonstrating the use of 'best practicable means'. The CEMP shall include rationale for and details of the chosen piling methodology and demonstrate that noise and vibration levels will not have an adverse impact on nearby premises. The CEMP must incorporate the dust mitigation measures as detailed within the Chapter 6.2.6 of the Irwin Carr Consultant report entitled 'Air Quality and Noise Impact Assessment, Bedford Yard, Bedford Street, Belfast Rp001 2018104 (Bedford Yard)', dated 18/09/2020.

The CEMP must also have due regard to Parts 1 and 2 of BS 5228:2009+A1:2014 Code of practice for noise and vibration control on construction and open sites, Noise and Vibration and to the IAQM, 'Guidance on the assessment of dust from demolition and construction version 1.1', and dated February 2014. The CEMP and associated records must be made available to the Council at any time upon request.

No construction, including demolition, site clearance or site preparation, shall take place unless in accordance with the Final CEMP.

Reason: Protection against adverse construction impacts

11. The development shall not be occupied until secure cycle parking facilities have been provided and permanently retained on site.

Reason: To ensure acceptable cycle parking facilities on the site and to encourage alternative modes of transport to the private car.

12. The development shall not operate unless in accordance with the Service Management Plan.

Reason: In the interests of road safety and the convenience of road users.

13. The development shall not operate unless in accordance with the approved Travel Plan.

Reason: To encourage alternative modes of transport to the private car.

14. If during the development works, new contamination or risks are encountered which have not previously been identified, works should cease and the Council shall be notified immediately in writing. This new contamination shall be fully investigated in accordance with the Land Contamination: Risk Management (LCRM) guidance available at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/landcontamination-how-to-manage-the-risks>. In the event of unacceptable risks being identified, a remediation strategy shall be agreed with the Planning Authority in writing, and subsequently implemented and verified to its satisfaction.

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

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

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

16. In the event that piling is required, no development or piling work shall commence on site unless a piling risk assessment, undertaken in full accordance with the methodology contained within the CL:AIRE document on "Piling and Penetrative Ground Improvement Methods on Land Affected by Contamination: Guidance on Pollution Prevention", has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Council. The methodology is available at:

<https://claire.co.uk/home/news-new/piling-and-penetrative-ground-improvementmethods-on-land-affected-by-contamination-guidance-on-pollution-prevention.html>

No piling works shall be carried out unless in accordance with the approved details.

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

17. Notwithstanding the submitted details, no development shall commence on site unless full details of the public realm improvements to the footway bounding the site in the areas shown on Drawing Courtyard Landscaping Plan received on 22 September 2020 have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Council. The details shall include:

1. Surface materials;
2. The design and provision of underground ducting; and
3. Programme for implementation.

The development shall not be occupied unless the public realm improvements have been carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: In the interests of the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, the setting of Listed Buildings, and to enhance connectivity to and from the development.

18. Notwithstanding the submitted details, no construction of the development hereby permitted shall take place unless in accordance with a schedule of external materials and sample panels, which shall first have been constructed on site and agreed in writing by the Council.

The sample panels shall show the make, type, size, colour, tone, bond, pointing, coursing, jointing, profile and texture of all external materials including bronze metal panels, bronze perforated panels, glazed window panels, back painted glazed panels as well as any other external materials. Where pertaining to glazing, details should include the colour, texture of the actual glazing material and panes and finish.

The approved sample panels shall be retained on site and made available for inspection by the Council for the duration of the construction works.

The works must be implemented and permanently retained in accordance with the details so approved.

Reason: To ensure the material finish and detailing is sympathetic to the setting of the nearby listed buildings.

19. Notwithstanding the submitted details, no works to 29-33 Bedford Street shall take place unless in accordance with a schedule of external materials and sample panels, which shall first have been constructed on site and agreed in writing by the Council.

The sample panels and submitted details must include:

- Detailed window schedules, including cross sections, elevations, sill detail/materials, the actual glazing material and panes, colour and finish. New windows shall be timber (hardwood) to match the design, mouldings and glazing bar pattern of the original windows.
- Sample panels of all replacement brickwork showing the proposed sizes, colour, texture face-bond; pointing mortar mix, joint thickness and finish profile.
- Details of new doors – samples shall be provided on site showing the colour and texture. New doors at ground floor level shall be timber, aluminium or bronze.
- Details of all string courses. Horizontal banding at cill level and window/door head details shall be retained where possible. Where new details are required they shall match the design of the original.
- Details of rainwater goods which shall be heavy duty cast aluminium or cast iron.

Any materials used e.g. natural Welsh roof slates/brickwork shall be made good to match the adjacent work with regard to the methods used and to material, colour, texture, size and profile.

The works must be implemented and permanently retained in accordance with the details so approved.

Reason: To ensure the material finish and detailing is sympathetic to the setting of the nearby listed buildings.

20. All hard and soft landscaping works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved Landscaping Proposals published by the Council on 13th February 2026. The works shall be carried out prior to the operation of the development and permanently retained unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Council.

Reason: In the interests of the character and appearance of the area.

21. The development hereby approved shall not be occupied unless the Climate Change measures, including SuDS, have been implemented in accordance with the Climate Change Statement published by the Council on 13th February 2026. The climate change measures shall be retained in accordance with the approved details at all times.

Reason: To mitigate and/or adapt to climate change.

22. The development hereby permitted shall not be operated unless in accordance with the approved Waste Management Plan date 9th September 2020 and published by the Council on 13th February 2026.

Reason: To ensure adequate management of waste and in the interests of the amenities of the area.

DRAFT CONDITIONS for LA04/2026/0260/DCA:

1. The demolition hereby granted must be begun within five years from the date of this consent.

Reason: As required by Section 105 of the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011.

2. This consent relates only to the walls / structures highlighted in red on approved drawing numbers 32-37 to the Planning Register on 13th February 2026 and to no other part of the building or buildings on site.

Reason: In the interests of the preservation of the City Centre Conservation Area.

DRAFT INFORMATIVES for LA04/2026/0260/DCA

1. This Demolition Consent Application is linked to the Full Application: LA04/2026/0282/F.

DRAFT INFORMATIVES for LA04/2026/0282/F

1. This Full Application is linked to DCA, reference LA04/2026/0260/DCA
2. Please make sure that you carry out the development in accordance with the approved plans and any planning conditions listed above. Failure to do so will mean that the proposal is unauthorised and liable for investigation by the Council's Planning Enforcement team. If you would like advice about how to comply with the planning permission, you can contact the Planning Service at Belfast City Council at planning@belfastcity.gov.uk.
3. This planning permission includes condition(s) which require further details to be submitted to and approved by the Council. Please read the condition(s) carefully so that you know when this information needs to be provided and approved. It could take a minimum of 8 weeks for the Council to approve the details, assuming that they are satisfactory, and sometimes much longer depending on the complexity of the condition. Please ensure that you give plenty of time for this process to be completed when planning the timeline of your project.
4. The grant of planning permission does not dispense with the need to obtain separate licenses, permits and authorisations under other regulatory processes. The applicant is also referred to the advice of consultees in their response to the application, which can be accessed on the Northern Ireland Planning Portal website. The responses from consultees may also include other general advice for the benefit of the applicant or developer, consents or permissions under other legislation or protocols.