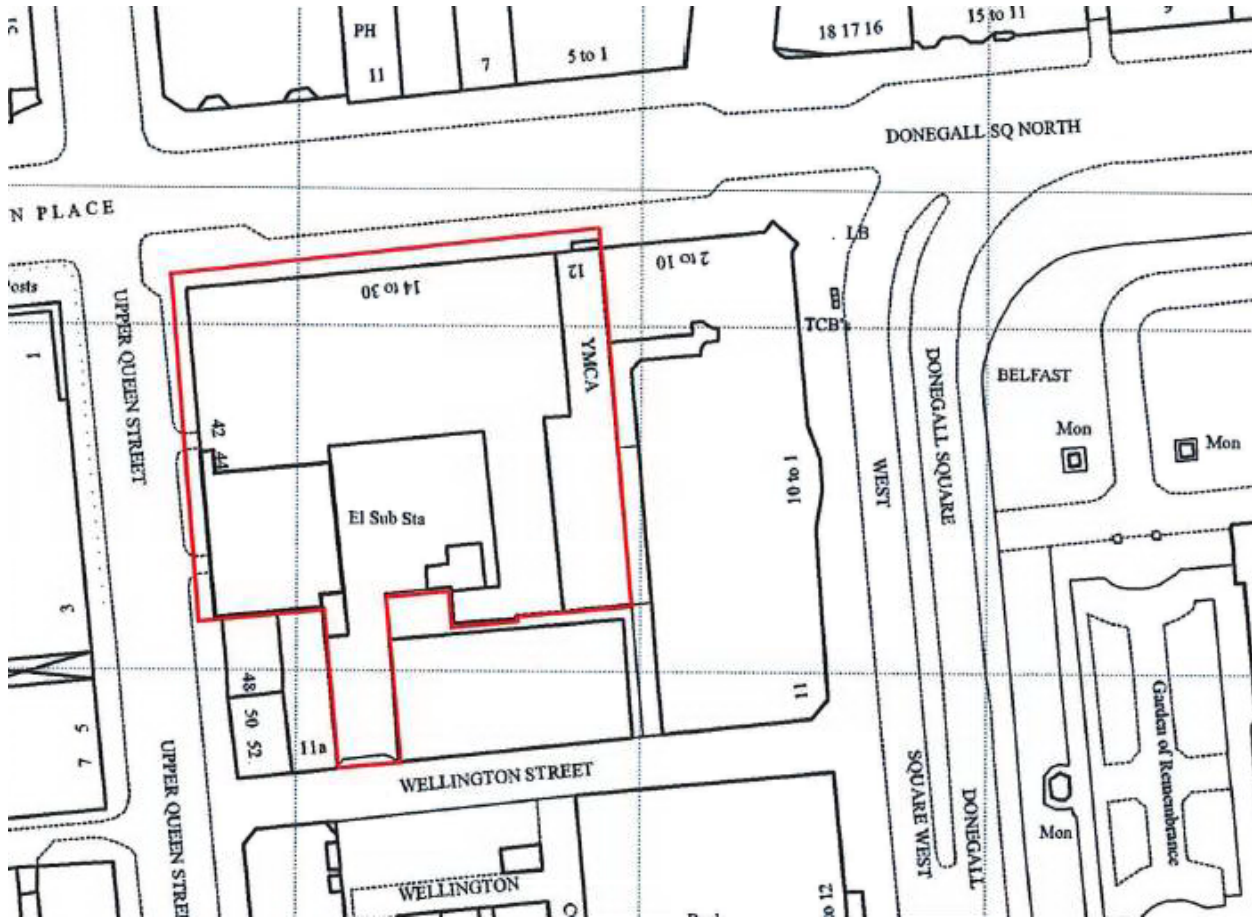


## Development Management Officer Report Committee Application

<b>Summary</b>	
<b>Committee Meeting Date: 13 December 2016</b>	
<b>Application ID:</b> LA04/2016/2045/F	
<b>Proposal:</b> Alterations to ground floor lobby of Oyster House, extension and alteration to floors one to seven to rear of Oyster House and Royston House (comprising 2115 square metres of new office floor space) and alterations to elevations on Upper Queen Street and Wellington Place (excluding shop fronts to existing occupied ground floor retail units and restaurants).	<b>Location:</b> 12 to 30 Wellington Place (Oyster House) and 42-46 Upper Queen Street (Royston House) Belfast BT1 6FX
<b>Referral Route:</b> Major Application – more than 200 square metres	
<b>Recommendation:</b>	<b>Approval subject to conditions</b>
<b>Applicant Name and Address:</b> Oakland (FRO) Ltd	<b>Agent Name and Address:</b> Turley Hamilton House 3 Joy Street Belfast
<p><b>Executive Summary:</b> The application seeks full planning permission for alterations to ground floor lobby of Oyster House, extension and alteration to floors one to seven to rear of Oyster House and Royston House comprised of 2,115 square metres of new office floor space and alterations to elevations onto Upper Queen Street and Wellington Place.</p> <p>The main issues to be considered in this case are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The principle of the development at this location;</li> <li>- Height, Scale, Massing &amp; Design;</li> <li>- Impact on the character of the conservation area;</li> <li>- Impact on neighbouring amenity; and</li> <li>- Traffic and parking.</li> </ul> <p>The site is located within the development limits of Belfast in the Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan 2015 and is identified as being within Belfast City Centre Conservation Area.</p> <p>The principle of development is considered to be acceptable. Consultees offered no objections in principle with the scheme.</p> <p>No objections have been received following neighbour notifications and press advertisements.</p> <p>Having regard to the development plan, relevant planning policies, and other material considerations, it is determined that the development will not result in demonstrable harm to the character of the area and will not impact on neighbouring amenity.</p> <p>Approval is therefore recommended subject to conditions.</p>	

## Case Officer Report

### Site Location Plan



### Characteristics of the Site and Area

**1.0 Description of Proposed Development**

1.1 Full planning permission is sought for alterations to the ground floor lobby of Oyster House; extension and alteration to floors one to seven to the rear of Oyster House and Royston House (comprising 2115 square metres of new office floor space); and alterations to the elevations onto Upper Queen Street and Wellington Place (excluding shop fronts to existing occupied ground floor retail units and restaurants).

**2.0 Description of Site**

2.1 The site is an eight storey office building with retail outlets at ground floor level. The site is a modern construction of square concrete panels to the elevations fronting Wellington Place and Queen's Street. The site occupies a corner site together with square panels and flat roof design gives it a boxy appearance. The site sits adjacent to an historic building, the Scottish Providence Building, a large glass screen separates the bulk of the site from the listed building, and at ground floor level the screen forms the main entrance point into the building.

2.2 The city centre location of the site ensures that the surrounding character is dominated by commercial uses as retail, restaurants and offices. There is a uniformity in the height of the site and the neighbouring listed building.

<b>Planning Assessment of Policy and other Material Considerations</b>	
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Relevant Planning History</b>
3.1	There are numerous applications on the site but none with relevance to this application.
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Policy Framework</b>
	Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan 2015 Regional Development Strategy Strategic Planning Policy Statement for Northern Ireland Planning Policy Statement 3 – Access, Movement & Parking Planning Policy Statement 4 – Planning and Economic Development Planning Policy Statement 6 – Planning, Archaeology & the Built Heritage Planning Policy Statement 13 – Transportation & Land Use Planning Policy Statement 15 (Revised) – Planning & Flood Risk
<b>5.0</b>	<b>Statutory Consultees</b>
	Transport NI- No Objections Subject to informatives
<b>6.0</b>	<b>Non- Statutory Consultees</b>
	BCC Conservation Area Officer – No objection in principle to the extension and curtain walling number of concerns with entrance design.
<b>7.0</b>	<b>Representations</b>
7.1	One letter was received from a tenant of the building indicating they were considering the proposal. No further documentation was received from the tenant.
<b>8.0</b>	<b>Other Material Considerations</b>
	Belfast City Centre Conservation Area Guide DCAN 15 – Vehicular Access Standards Local Government Waste Storage Guide
<b>9.0</b>	<b>Assessment</b>
9.1	The key issues to be considered in this case are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The principle of the development and office use at this location;</li> <li>- Height, Scale, Massing &amp; Design;</li> <li>- Impact on the character of the conservation area;</li> <li>- Impact on neighbouring amenity; and</li> <li>- Traffic and parking.</li> </ul> <p><u>Principle of Development and Office Use at this Location</u></p>
9.2	The application site is located on unzoned land with the city centre and with the city centre office area. The site is also within the City Centre Conservation Area and the Character Area Civic Precinct CC008.
9.3	BMAP is clear in that Belfast City Centre remains the first choice for major office development (Policy OF1). 2115 square metres of new office floor space is proposed in the proposal the applicant has highlighted that this is propose to be Grade A office – Belfast suffers from a deficit in such space. In planning terms Grade A office space falls within Planning Use Class B1(a).
9.4	PPS4: Planning and Economic Development sets out the planning policies for economic development uses. It recognises that the planning system has a key role to play in achieving a vibrant economy.

9.5	Policy PED 1 states that a development proposal for a Class B1 business use will be permitted in a city or town centre and in other locations that may be specified for such a use in a development plan. Given the city centre location the proposed uses are considered to comply with the development plan and the policies contained with the SPPS as well as PED 1 of PPS4.
9.6	Having considered the contribution to the local economy this development would bring it is considered on balance that such a proposal would not conflict with any relevant policy detailed in PPS 4.
<b><u>Height, Scale, Massing and Design</u></b>	
9.7	The site is located within Belfast City Centre Conservation Area. Policy BH 12 advises that development will normally be permitted for alterations and extensions when key criteria are met. Paragraph 7.8 of PPS6 requires proposals for the alteration or extension of properties in a conservation area to be sensitive to the existing building, in keeping with the character and appearance of the particular area and will not prejudice the amenities of adjacent properties.
9.8	Designation CC 008 of BMAP provides general advice that development proposals shall take account of the height of adjoining buildings. It is not proposed to increase the height of the buildings. The existing building comprises 8 storey. The extension is confined to the rear of the building from 1 <sup>st</sup> floor to 7 <sup>th</sup> Floor. The form and height of the building is considered to be appropriate.
9.9	Paragraph 3.8 of SPPS advises that planning permission should be granted for sustainable development having regard for the development plan and other material considerations, unless the development will cause demonstrable harm to interests of acknowledged importance. The proposal being within the development limits of the development plan confirms it is compliant with the plan other areas of acknowledged importance are set out below.
9.10	In regards to demonstrable harm to areas of acknowledged importance the proposal will have no significant impact on its surroundings. The bulk of the work, the additional floor areas and curtain walling will be located within the inner courtyard of the site with limited public views. The second element of the proposal is for upgrade entrances to the site. This will involve the change of use of an existing retail unit into a new enlarge entrance foyer, at Wellington Place. This work will include creating a double height entrance with the removal of a section of the first floor. The entrance is to be given a more prominent appearance with the introduction of granite and bronze panels framing the pedestrian access point to the building. The access to Royston House is also to be upgraded with granite and bronze framing only and will not involve the use of additional floor space. The proposal also calls for the replacement of the existing windows with the installation of new window frames and glazing.
<b><u>Impact on the Character of the Conservation Area</u></b>	
9.11	The principle amendment to the external appearance of the building is the new PPC aluminium glazed curtain walling system which the replace the existing. New PPC aluminium frameless windows will replace existing windows and dark granite panels will be added around the main entrances to the buildings with the inclusion of bronze effect panels.
9.12	It is accepted that the proposed use of curtain walling as a cladding enclosing the new floor

	<p>areas and also used to modernise the remaining façade within the courtyard of the building is not a common feature usually found within the Conservation Area. However there will be a distinct lack of any significant public views of the cladding. This will ensure that the character of the Conservation Area is not impacted upon given that views of the cladding will be limited to the access gate located on Wellington Street. Wellington Street is not considered to be a busy thoroughfare thus exposing the proposed cladding. The CAO in his comments stated no objection to the rear extension although he would prefer to see an element of verticality and solidity introduced to the proposed cladded facades. However, it is considered that, on balance, given the limited views of the proposed curtain walling the proposed materials are acceptable.</p>
9.13	The upgraded access to Royston House (Queen Street) will include the erection of new granite and bronze framing to give the entrance a greater prominence on the street scene.
9.14	The upgrade to the entrance to Oyster House (Wellington Place) involves a number of elements including the introduction of the new granite and bronze frame, the incorporation of a vacant retail unit into the new foyer and the creation of a double height entrance with the removal of a section of the first floor.
9.15	The CAO has raised some concern regarding the double height entrance feature. The design shows the new frame terminating in line with the top of the first floor cladding panels, this allows the proposed design to be read in line with the first storey cladding panels of the building. This is considered to be the most natural place to terminate the framing and will not affect the reading of the building from street level.
9.16	The inclusion of the ground floor retail unit into a new foyer for the building is acceptable in terms of planning policy the proposed change will neither affect the character of the host building or the surrounding Conservation Area. The upper floors of the building are currently in use as office space taking into consideration the proposed increase in floor space a larger foyer maybe necessary and would be a useful tool in attracting new clients into the building as well as the City.
9.17	The proposed installation of new windows also raised a concern with the CAO. The current windows were design with opening elements due to the lack of mechanical air conditioning to the building. The building is now air conditioned - a requirement for Grade A Office Space. Given the surrounding context it is considered that the proposed windows will not introduce a new unacceptable element to the conservation area and are not contrary to relevant planning policy.
	<u>Traffic and Parking</u>
9.18	The site is located within an Area of Parking Restraint (Designation CC 025) in BMAP. Policy TRAN 1: Parking Standards within an Area of Parking Restraint.
9.19	The proposal application was accompanied with a transport assessment form (TAF). Transport NI having assessed the TAF for the development has offered no objection subject to informatives. Given the city centre location with access to all forms of public transport that the proposed extra floor space will not create a detriment to the surrounding area.
<b>10.0</b>	<b>Summary of Recommendation:</b> Approval
10.1	Having regard to the development plan, relevant planning policies, and other material considerations, it is considered that the development is acceptable. Approval is recommended with conditions. . It is therefore requested that Committee delegates the final wording of the conditions to the Director of Planning and Place.

<b>11.0</b>	<p><b>Conditions</b></p> <p>As required by Section 61 of the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011, the development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of 5 years from the date of this permission.</p> <p>Reason: Time Limit.</p> <p>No development shall take place until samples of all external finishes has been submitted to and been approved in writing by the Planning Authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved sample details.</p> <p>Reason: In the interests of visual amenity and the character and appearance of the area.</p> <p>In the event that contamination not previously considered is encountered during the approved development of this site, works should cease and the Council shall be notified immediately. This new contamination shall be fully investigated in accordance with the Model Procedures for the Management of Land Contamination (CLR11). In the event of unacceptable risks being identified, a remediation strategy shall be agreed with the Planning Service in writing, and subsequently implemented and verified to its satisfaction.</p> <p>Reason: Protection of environmental receptors to ensure the site is suitable for use.</p> <p>No site works of any nature or development shall take place until a programme of archaeological work has been implemented, in accordance with a written scheme and programme prepared by a qualified archaeologist, submitted by the applicant and approved by the Department. The programme should provide for the identification and evaluation of archaeological remains within the site, for mitigation of the impacts of development, through excavation recording or by preservation of remains, and for preparation of an archaeological report.</p> <p>Reason: to ensure that archaeological remains within the application site are properly identified, and protected or appropriately recorded.</p> <p>Access shall be afforded to the site at all reasonable times to any archaeologist nominated by the Department to observe the operations and carry out archaeological recording.</p> <p>Reason: to ensure the identification, evaluation and appropriate recording of any archaeological remains which are exposed by the operations.</p>
<b>12.0</b>	<p><b>Notification to Department (if relevant)</b></p> <p>N/A</p>
<b>13.0</b>	<p><b>Representations from Elected Members</b></p> <p>N/A</p>

<b>ANNEX</b>	
<b>Date Valid</b>	12th September 2016
<b>Date First Advertised</b>	14th October 2016
<b>Date Last Advertised</b>	14 <sup>th</sup> October 2016
<b>Details of Neighbour Notification (all addresses)</b>	
<p>The Owner/Occupier,  1 Donegall Square West, Town Parks, Belfast, Antrim, BT1 6JA,  The Owner/Occupier,  1-3, Wellington Place, Town Parks, Belfast, Antrim, BT1 6GA,  The Owner/Occupier,  10 Donegall Square West, Town Parks, Belfast, Antrim, BT1 6JH,  The Owner/Occupier,  11 Donegall Square West, Town Parks, Belfast, Antrim, BT1 6JH,  11A Wellington Street, Town Parks, Belfast, Antrim, BT1 6HT,  12 - 18 Donegall Square West, Town Parks, Belfast, Antrim, BT1 6JA,  2, Wellington Buildings, 1 Wellington Street, Town Parks, Belfast, Antrim,,  2-4 Wellington Buildings, Wellington Street, Town Parks, Belfast, Antrim, BT1 6HT,  22, 26, 28-30 Wellington Place, Town Parks, Belfast, Antrim, BT1 6GE,  3 Donegall Square West, Town Parks, Belfast, Antrim, BT1 6JA,  34 Wellington Place, Town Parks, Belfast, Antrim, BT1 6GF,  38 Wellington Place, Town Parks, Belfast, Antrim, BT1 6GF,  4 Donegall Square West, Town Parks, Belfast, Antrim, BT1 6JA,  4 Wellington Place, Town Parks, Belfast, Antrim, BT1 6GE,  46, 48 Upper Queen Street, Town Parks, Belfast, Antrim, BT1 6FD,  5 Wellington Place, Town Parks, Belfast, Antrim, BT1 6GA,  5-6, Donegall Square West, Town Parks, Belfast, Antrim, BT1 6JA,  5-7 Eagle Star House, Upper Queen Street, Town Parks, Belfast, Antrim, BT1 6FB,  50-56 Johnson House, Wellington Place, Town Parks, Belfast, Antrim, BT1 6GF,  52-54, Upper Queen Street, Town Parks, Belfast, Antrim, BT1 6FD,  6 Wellington Place, Town Parks, Belfast, Antrim, BT1 6GE,  8 Wellington Place, Town Parks, Belfast, Antrim, BT1 6GE,  9 Donegall Square West, Town Parks, Belfast, Antrim, BT1 6JH,  9 Upper Queen Street, Town Parks, Belfast, Antrim, BT1 6FB,  Capital House, 3 Upper Queen Street, Town Parks, Belfast, Antrim, BT1 6FB,  Fisherwick Building, 9 Upper Queen Street, Town Parks, Belfast, Antrim, BT1 6FB,  Floor 6, Capital House, 3 Upper Queen Street, Town Parks, Belfast, Antrim, BT1 6FB,  Royston House, 34 Upper Queen Street, Town Parks, Belfast, Antrim, BT1 6FA,  Scottish Providence Buildings, 7 Donegall Square West, Town Parks, Belfast, Antrim, BT1  Unit 10, 46 Upper Queen Street, Town Parks, Belfast, Antrim, BT1 6FD,  Unit 11, 46 Upper Queen Street, Town Parks, Belfast, Antrim, BT1 6FD,  Unit 12, 46 Upper Queen Street, Town Parks, Belfast, Antrim, BT1 6FD,  Unit 6, Ferguson/royston House, Wellington Place, Town Parks, Belfast, Antrim, BT1 6GE,</p>	

<b>Date of Last Neighbour Notification</b>	5th October 2016
<b>Date of EIA Determination</b>	N/A
<b>ES Requested</b>	No
<b>Drawing Numbers and Title</b>	



Drawing No. 01  
Type: site location  
Status: Submitted

Drawing No. 10  
Type: proposed site block plan  
Status: Submitted

Drawing No. 11  
Type: proposed ground floor plan  
Status: Submitted

Drawing No. 12a  
Type: proposed first floor plan  
  
Status: Submitted

Drawing No. 13  
Type: proposed second + third floor plan  
Status: Submitted

Drawing No. 14  
Type: proposed fourth to sixth floor plan  
  
Status: Submitted

Drawing No. 15  
Type: proposed seventh floor plan  
  
Status: Submitted

Drawing No. 16  
Type: proposed roof plan  
  
Status: Submitted

Drawing No. 17a  
Type: proposed elevations  
  
Status: Submitted

Drawing No. 18  
Type: proposed elevations - courtyard  
Status: Submitted

Drawing No. 20  
Type: proposed elevations  
Status: Submitted

<b>Notification to Department (if relevant)</b> Date of Notification to Department: Response of Department: