

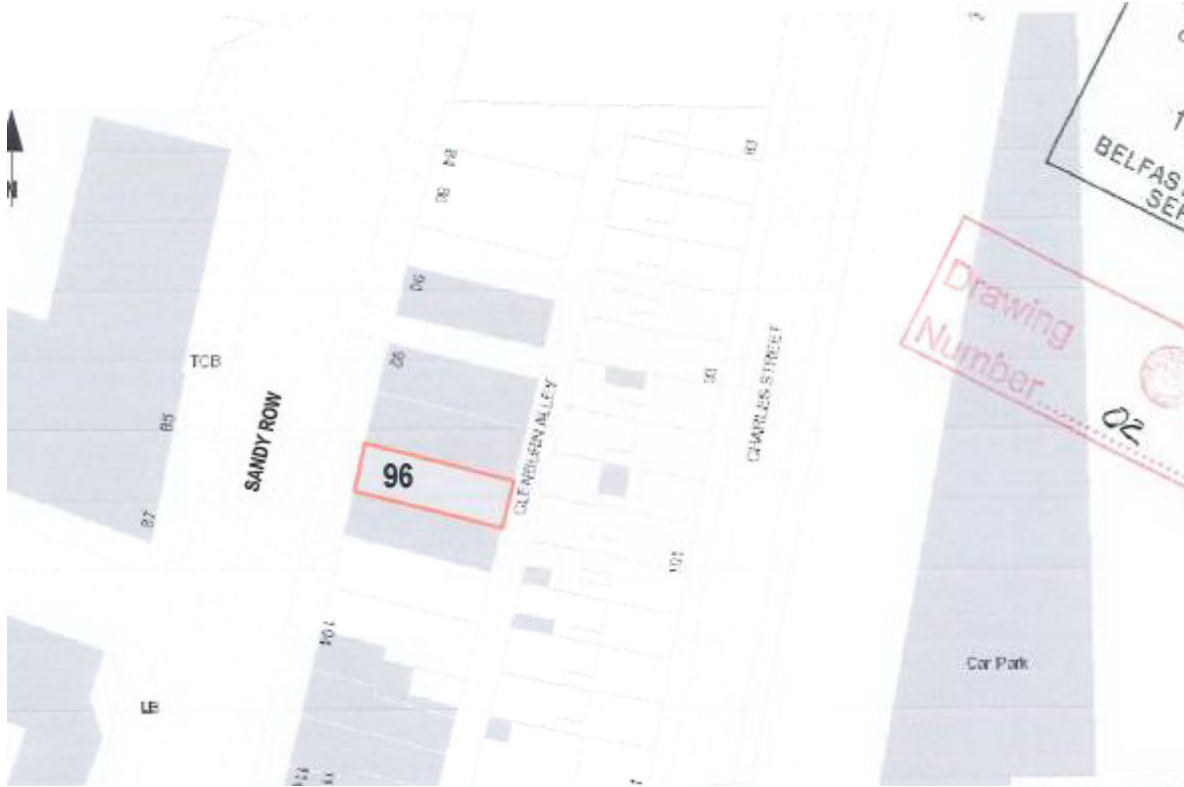
**Development Management Officer Report
Committee Application**

Summary	
Committee Meeting Date: 14 February 2017	
Application ID: LA04/2016/2553/F	
Proposal: External alterations and extension to existing building to create 2no. 1 bedroom apartments on upper floors.	Location: 96 Sandy Row Belfast BT12 5EX
Referral Route: Proposal partly funded by BCC	
Recommendation:	Approval Subject to Conditions
Applicant Name and Address: Sandy Row Community Forum 63/75 Sandy Row Belfast BT12 5ER	Agent Name and Address: Dickson Architectural Services 141A Greyabbey Road Ballywalter Newtownards
<p>Executive Summary:</p> <p>The application seeks full planning permission for the alteration and extension of the existing building to provide 2no. one bedroom apartments to the upper floors and retention of existing retail unit for use as drop in centre.</p> <p>The key issues in the assessment of this application are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Principle of Development and Use at this location; - Scale and Design; - Visual Impact; - Overlooking; - Living Over the Shop - Traffic & Parking; - Other Environmental Matters; - Community Benefits <p>The site is located within the development limits of Belfast in the Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan with no other designations. The principle of development is acceptable given its city centre location.</p> <p>The proposal has been assessed the relevant plan and planning policy.</p> <p>Transport NI & NI Water offered no objections in principle with the scheme. BCC Environmental Health concerned regarding adjoining vacant building former use hot food bar.</p> <p>No objections have been received following neighbour notifications and press advertisements, one letter of support has been received.</p> <p>The building is within an established terrace which is run down and in need of regeneration. It is acknowledged that the proposed introduces elements that are not common in the immediate area but this does not automatically imply harm to neighbouring buildings. The resulting regeneration must also be considered and balanced in the overall assessment of this application.</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 residential amenity. Approval is therefore recommended with conditions.

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 the alteration and extension of the existing building at 96 Sandy Row to provide 2No. one bedroom apartments to the upper floors and retention of existing retail unit at ground floor level.
2.0	Description of Site
2.1	The site is a two storey retail building finished in painted render with a roller shutter and shop-front at ground floor level and boarded up windows above. The site occupies a mid-terrace position in the street, the immediate area adjacent to the site is made up of similar styled properties. Although a number of the units are vacant the appearance given by the site and the neighbours units would suggest that this area was at one time the retail hub of the surrounding area. The character of the surrounding area is a mixture of retail units and residential dwellings (to the rear of the site). The road fronting the site is a busy thoroughfare with a significant number of on street parking bays.
Planning Assessment of Policy and other Material Considerations	
3.0	Site History
	No relevant planning history found
4.0	Policy Framework
	Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan 2015 Strategic Planning Policy Statement for Northern Ireland Planning Policy Statement 3 - Access, Movement and Parking Planning Policy Statement 7 – Quality Residential Environments Planning Policy Statement 12 – Housing in Settlements Planning Policy Statement 13 – Transportation & Land Use
5.0	Statutory Consultees
	NIEA- Waste Management Unit- No Objections Transport NI- No Objections
6.0	Non- Statutory Consultees
	Belfast City Council- EPU- No Objections in Principle – Raised Concern Regarding Neighbouring Use Although Vacant for 3 Years
7.0	Representations
	No representations received.
8.0	Other Material Considerations
	Living Places – An Urban Stewardship and Design Guide for Northern Ireland Belfast City Centre – Regeneration and Investment Strategy Creating Places – Achieving Quality in Residential Developments DCAN 8 –Housing in Urban Area

	DCAN 15 – Vehicular Access Standards Local Government Waste Storage Guide
9.0	Assessment
9.1	<p>The key issues in the assessment of this application are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Principle of Development and Use at this location; - Scale and Design; - Visual Impact; - Overlooking; - Living Over the Shop - Traffic & Parking; - Other Environmental Matters; - Community Benefits <p><u>Principle of Development and Use at this location</u></p>
9.2	Given the city centre location the presumption is therefore in favour of development subject to the planning considerations detailed below.
9.3	Belfast City Centre Regeneration and Investment Strategy (Sept 2015) states that Belfast has a low overall city centre residential population in comparison to other cities. This document recognises that a significant residential population is highly important for the successful functioning of a city centre. Within this context the principle of residential use at this location is acceptable.
9.4	It is also proposed to retain and reinstate a retail ground floor function which at this location is considered to be acceptable and will enhance the vitality and viability of Sandy Row.
	<u>Scale & Design</u>
9.5	Proposals for new residential development must take account of specific circumstances of each site. Policy QD 1 of PPS7 is clear in that planning permission will only be granted for new residential development where it is demonstrated that the proposal will create a quality and sustainable residential environment. The design and layout of residential development should be based on an overall design concept that draws upon the positive aspects of the character and appearance of the surrounding area.
9.6	Designation CC 013 of BMAP provides general advice that development proposals shall respect the existing building heights and be of a minimum 2 to 3 storeys allowing for up to 5 storeys at Dublin Road and Shaftesbury Square areas. The designation expresses the view that the area is a typical city centre fringe consisting of mix commercial use and residential use. It is also accepted that there are areas of public realm that are of a poor quality and requires enhancement.
9.7	The proposal includes a rear extension to provide additional accommodation at first floor level and above to facilitate the creation of two apartments – one at first floor level and a loft conversion above. To form the apartments a three storey extension is proposed to the rear of the property; the extension will utilise all of the site to the rear of the property. There will be no increase in floorspace at ground floor level. The first floor will have an increase of 24.9 square metres of floor space in addition to the existing 22.6 square metres therefore creating a total overall space of 47.5 square metres at first floor level. The second floor apartment will create a floor space of 43.4 square metres.

9.8	<p>The existing height of the building is currently 7.0 metres high the proposal will result in the rear extension having a finished height of 7.5 metres representing an increase of 0.5 metres. It is accepted that is it not normally appropriate to allow an extension to project above the ridge line of the existing building. However, the angle of pitch of the proposed roof level has been designed to minimise visual impact on the street scene and is considered to be on balance an acceptable design solution for the proposal at this location. It is also proposed that a dormer window is installed to the front roof elevation, to provide additional head room and light to the second floor apartment. Within the extension there will also be windows installed to the rear elevation, these windows will serve the proposed bedrooms</p>
9.9	<p>It is accepted that the proposal will introduce new elements to the front and rear elevations that are not common to the immediate area, the dormer window to the front roof profile, the three storey rear extension protruding above existing roof line (by 0.5 metres) and the introduction of living accommodation above the shop unit with limited dedicated amenity space.</p>
9.10	<p>Each of the elements will introduce a new design to an established terrace the assessment is whether the design is detrimental to the character of terrace and the surrounding area. The proposed lead clad dormer window is an uncommon feature along this street frontage however, it is not an uncommon feature within the city especially and for buildings of a similar age. The use of lead cladding as a finishing material is common for period dormers in the city and is acceptable at this location.</p>
9.11	<p>The building is within an established terrace which is run down and in need of regeneration. It is acknowledged that the proposed introduces elements that are not common in the immediate area but this does not automatically imply harm to neighbouring buildings. The resulting regeneration must also be considered and balanced in the overall assessment of this application. Given the urban city centre context and taking account of the vision of Community Form to showcase the potential for the revitalisation this property with a view to purchasing additional properties within the terrace to encourage and develop future living above the shop therefore act as a catalyst for the regeneration of this part of Sandy Row. The form of the extension establishes a presence that is considered to be appropriate and on balance, it is therefore considered that the proposed design and architectural treatment and materials are acceptable.</p> <p><u>Visual Impact</u></p>
9.12	<p>The extension, when viewed from Sandy Row, will be partly obscured by the terrace but will remain a significant view; other views points will be limited given the built up nature of the surrounding area. The angle of the existing pitch roof has been designed to link with the new flat roof. This design method will reduce significantly the impact of the extension on the street scene.</p> <p><u>Overlooking</u></p>
9.13	<p>The installation of additional windows to the rear of the extension has the potential to create issues of overlooking regarding neighbouring properties. In this case the windows are to serve bedrooms, overlooking from bedroom windows is a common feature in areas that have a high to moderate density of housing. Given the moderately high density of housing in this area, it is considered that the potential to overlook is not significantly higher than is commonly found in the surrounding urban context.</p>

	<p><u>Living Over the Shop</u></p>
9.14	<p>Planning policy HS 1 “Living over the Shop” of PPS 12 is considered relevant to this proposal. The policy advises that permission will be granted for development that provides a suitable living environment and adequate refuse storage space. The proposal will create apartments with an average floor space of 46sqm. Space standards taken from DSD’s Housing Association Guide 2009 indicates that a one bedroom apartment for a single person should have a floor space of 35/40sqm. It is considered that the floor space provided by this development is to an acceptable level. Living Over the Shop brings many social and economic benefits and is a cost-effective means of accommodating additional housing.</p>
9.15	<p>Bin storage for the development is proposed to be within a designated bin storage area of the extension’s ground floor; which accesses onto the alleyway backing the site. The internal space within the proposed apartments are compatible with the space standards as set out in the Addendum to PPS 7.</p>
	<p><u>Traffic and Parking</u></p>
9.16	<p>The proposal has been assessed against Policy AMP 7 of PPS 3: Access, Movement and parking. The proposal is considered to be satisfactory serviced by existing on street parking and provides accessibility to public transport links.</p>
	<p><u>Other Environmental Matters</u></p>
9.17	<p>Paragraph 4.11 and 4.12 of the SPPS states there are a wide range of environmental and amenity considerations including noise and air quality, which should be taken into account by planning authorities when proposing policies or managing development. Other amenity considerations include sewerage, drainage, waste management and water quality.</p>
9.18	<p>The consultees, with the exception Environmental Health, have stated that they are content with the development in its present form, indicating there are no significant car parking issues or issues regarding water and sewage provision.</p>
9.19	<p>Environmental Health (EHO) has raised concerns regarding the vacant adjoining building, formerly used as a hot food bar and the attached antiquated extractor flue. EHO are concerned the premises, could return to hot food use with a substandard extractor unit. In such an occurrence there is a potential for noise/odour nuisance affecting the occupants of the proposed apartments. Whilst Planning Service notes this concerns of EHO it has also been in advised by the applicant, Sandy Row Community Forum, that negotiations are ongoing for the acquisition of the vacant hot food bar (vacant for 3 years). The applicant’s stated intention is to undertake a similar scheme to provide additional living accommodation above ground floor retail premises. The concerns of EHO are noted and it is recommended that an informative is attached to advise the developer to this effect.</p>
	<p><u>Community Benefits</u></p>
9.20	<p>The project has been development by a Local Community Forum to demonstrate the potential for Living Over the Shops for Sandy Row. The proposed accommodation is to provide affordable quality rented accommodation for singles/couples no dependents who are not able to secure housing through NIHE. The properties will be managed by a social enterprise with all monies being reinvested by into community development projects. The</p>

9.21	<p>retail unit will employ 2 permanent workers and also casual staff. It is intended to act as a local tourism information point and will showcase local history.</p> <p>The proposal offers benefits to the surrounding area in terms of bringing back into use a vacant retail outlet. The proposal offers potential of job creation in this area, the use of the shop for the sale of souvenirs has the potential to attract tourists to this part of the city and could create additional footfall to other businesses in the vicinity.</p>
10.0	<p>Summary of Recommendation: Approval</p>
10.1	<p>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.</p>
11.0	<p>Conditions</p> <p>1. 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>
12.0	<p>Notification to Department (if relevant)</p> <p>N/A</p>
13.0	<p>Representations from Elected Members</p> <p>N/A</p>

ANNEX	
Date Valid	5th December 2014
Date First Advertised	2nd January 2015
Date Last Advertised	2nd January 2015
Details of Neighbour Notification (all addresses) The Owner/Occupier, 101 Charles Street South, Malone Lower, Belfast, Antrim, BT12 5GB, The Owner/Occupier, 103 Charles Street South, Malone Lower, Belfast, Antrim, BT12 5GB, Kyle Douglas 46 Matilda Avenue Malone Lower Belfast GLEND A DAVIES 67-75 Sandy Row Malone Lower Belfast The Owner/Occupier, 97 Charles Street South, Malone Lower, Belfast, Antrim, BT12 5GB, The Owner/Occupier, 98 Sandy Row, Malone Lower, Belfast, Antrim, BT12 5EX, The Owner/Occupier, 99 Charles Street South, Malone Lower, Belfast, Antrim, BT12 5GB,	
Date of Last Neighbour Notification	6th January 2017
Date of EIA Determination	N/A
ES Requested	No
Planning History N/A Summary of Consultee Responses TransportNI & NIWater no objection BCC Environmental Health concerns regarding neighbouring premises	
Drawing Numbers and Title Drawing No. 01 Type: site location Status: Submitted Drawing No. 02 Type: Block Plan Status: Submitted	

Drawing No. 07a
Type: Proposed ground floor plan 1st floor plan
Status: Submitted

Drawing No. 08a
Type: elevations and 2nd floor plan
Status: Submitted

Drawing No. 09a
Type: proposed sections
Status: Submitted

Drawing No. 10a
Type: proposed elevations
Status: Submitted

Notification to Department (if relevant)

Date of Notification to Department:
Response of Department: