

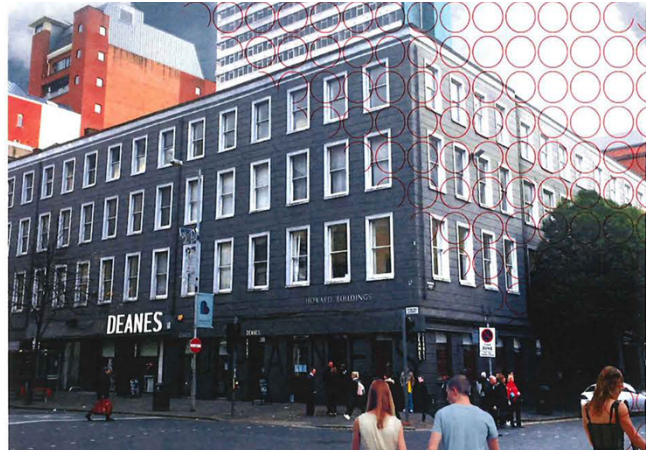
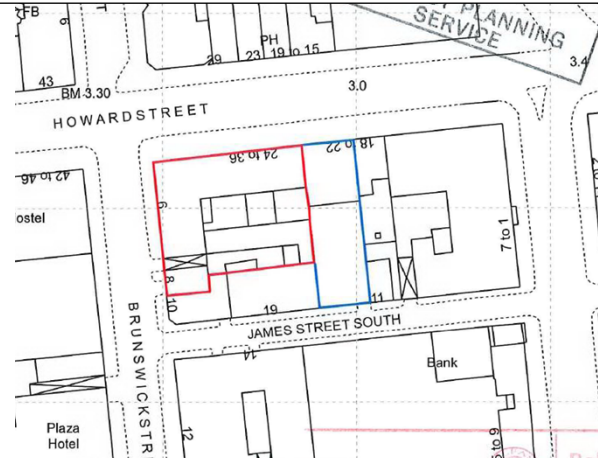
Development Management Officer Report Committee Application

Summary	
Committee Meeting Date: 14 th March, 2017	
Application ID: LA04/2016/2693/F	
Proposal: Change of use of Howard Buildings from offices and dry cleaners unit into a hotel (81 bedrooms) and ground floor cafe. Single storey ground floor and third floor extension. Elevation changes.	Location: 24-40 Howard Street Belfast BT1 6PA
Referral Route: Large Scale Change of Use	
Recommendation:	Approval
Applicant Name and Address: Davcrow Ltd David Crowe Dax House 18-22 Howard Street Belfast BT1 6PA	Agent Name and Address: Rapport Architects 11-19 Blythe Street Belfast BT12 5HU
<p>Executive Summary:</p> <p>The application seeks full permission for the change of use of Howard Buildings from dry cleaners on the ground floor and offices above to café and 81 bedroom hotel. A third floor extension and ground floor extension are also proposed.</p> <p>The key issues in the assessment of the proposed development include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The acceptability of the proposed hotel at this location and the loss of existing office space; - The acceptability and impact of café at this location - Impact on character appearance of the Linen conservation area; - Design and layout of the proposed accommodation; - Impact on transport and other infrastructure. <p>The site is located within the Belfast City Centre as designated in the Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan. It is also within the Linen Conservation Area and within the Civic Precinct Character Area (Designation CC0008).</p> <p>The proposed hotel use is compatible with the locality and the site, and the loss of office space is not considered detrimental to the overall provision in the city centre. The extension to the Brunswick Street elevation will improve and enhance the character and appearance of the area and all important views within, into and out of the area will be protected.</p> <p>Consultees are content with the proposal subject to conditions. No representations have been received.</p> <p>Having had regard to the development plan, relevant planning policies and other material considerations it is concluded that the proposal complies with the development plan, regional</p>	

planning policy and other material considerations.

Case Officer Report

Site Location Plan



Characteristics of the Site and Area

<p>1.0</p>	<p>Description of Proposed Development Change of use of Howard Buildings from offices and dry cleaners unit into a hotel (81 bedrooms) and ground floor cafe. Single storey ground floor and third floor extension with elevation changes.</p>
<p>2.0</p>	<p>Description of Site The existing building addresses Howard Street with a four storey frontage and a three storey block to Brunswick Street with a service yard to the rear. The site is identified as being within Linen Conservation Area and within the Commercial District Character Area (CC 007). The site is also within an Area of Parking Restraint for the city core (CC 025). Deanes Restaurant and a dry cleaners are located on the ground floor with the upper floors existing as vacant offices. The site is abutted to the east by Dax House and to the south by the Shields Building.</p> <p>The area is commercial in character/use comprising office, retail, and food/restaurant uses.</p>

Planning Assessment of Policy and other Material Considerations

<p>3.0</p>	<p>Site History None Relevant</p>
<p>4.0</p>	<p>Policy Framework</p>
<p>4.1</p>	<p>Regional Development Strategy (RDS); Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan (2015) Strategic Planning Policy Statement (SPPS) Planning Policy Statement 3 - Access, Movement and Parking Planning Policy 4 - Planning and Economic Development Planning Policy Statement 6 - Planning, Archaeology and the Built Heritage Development Control Advice Note 4 – Restaurants, Cafes and Fast Food Outlet</p>
<p>5.0</p>	<p>Statutory Consultees Responses</p>
<p>5.1</p>	<p>Transport NI – No objection with conditions</p>

	NI Water – No objection
6.0	Non Statutory Consultees Responses
6.1	Environmental Health – no objection with conditions
7.0	Representations
7.1	None received
8.0	Other Material Considerations
8.1	Linen Conservation Area Guidance
9.0	Assessment
9.1	<p>The key issues in the assessment of the proposal are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The acceptability of the proposed hotel at this location and the loss of existing office space; - The acceptability and impact of café at this location - Impact on character appearance of the Linen conservation area; - Design and layout of the proposed accommodation; - Impact on transport and other infrastructure. <p><u>The acceptability of proposed hotel use at this location and the loss of existing office space</u></p> <p>The proposal is to change the use of a vacant office building to an 81 bedroom Hotel with café on the ground floor. A third floor extension to Brunswick Street Elevation and minor ground floor rear extension is also proposed. While the building is currently vacant offices there remains significant provision of office accommodation within the city centre and the loss of office space is not considered detrimental to the city centre as a whole. A hotel use at this location will further enhance the vitality and viability of the city centre and it is considered, on balance, that such a proposal would not conflict with any relevant policy and in particular PED7 of PPS4.</p> <p><u>The acceptability and impact of café at this location</u></p> <p>The proposed café is not located within the Primary Retail core or along Primary Retail Frontage and is therefore compatible with the locality and the site. Dax House, a four storey office building abuts the site to the east. The café will not cause any noise disturbance or impact on the amenity of the occupiers by virtue of smells and fumes</p> <p><u>Impact on the character and appearance of the Linen Conservation Area.</u></p> <p>The site is located within the Civic Precinct Character Area (CC08) as designated in BMAP. This sets out a number of urban design criteria for the area.</p> <p>Designation CC08 does not refer specifically to Howard Street however it does refer to new developments respecting the building line, new building heights should be between 5 and 7 storeys and shall reflect traditional plot widths. The proposed extension is contained to the Brunswick Street elevation and will consist of an additional storey to match the original Georgian frontage, the scale and massing is considered in keeping with the existing context of the site. The proposal is therefore considered to comply with CC09 of the development plan.</p>

The site is identified as falling within the Linen Conservation Area. The primary policy considerations are set out in PPS 6, Policy BH12 – new development in a Conservation Area. BH12 sets out 7 general criteria for proposals. It considered the proposal complies with these policy tests. The existing Howard Street elevation will remain unaltered, the proposed changes to the Brunswick Street elevation will continue the external rendered treatment and match the existing finish. It will improve and enhance the character and appearance of the area and all important views within, into and out of the area will be protected.

The Conservation Area Officer has no objection to the change of use however has concerns regarding the demolition of rear toilet block and the impact on the internal fabric and loss of period features such as chimney breasts. As a consequence the rear toilet block will no longer be demolished. It has been highlighted that the chimney breasts have no fireplaces and it is necessary to remove them to provide sufficient space for the bedrooms whilst retaining all of the original Georgian Walls. On balance it is considered that the minor internal works and the minimal changes to the elevations, will not significantly alter the fabric of the conservation area.

Design and layout of the proposed accommodation

The existing building will be retained and refurbished, the Howard Street elevation will remain unchanged. An additional storey is proposed on the Brunswick Street elevation, it will match and continue the original Georgian frontage with the existing rendered treatment replicated. Within the service yard the existing flu/ducting will be extended by 3.5m to raise it above the eaves in line with Environmental Services requirements. On the southern elevation within the service yard, 12 windows at the second and third floor will be replaced with 6 new Georgian style windows to match the existing. These amendments will not be visible from the street and will have no impact on the outward appearance of the development or on the Conservation Area.

Environmental Services Department has offered no objections to the proposal subject to conditions regarding an odour abatement system in order to ensure neighbouring commercial units are not adversely affected by cooking odours. These conditions are detailed below.

The proposed hotel does not overlook any residential properties, the adjoining premises are primarily commercial and office accommodation. The extension on Brunswick Street elevation will not cause any loss of light or overshadowing and will not have a detrimental impact on amenity.

The impact on transport and other infrastructure

The hotel and café will be accessed directly by pedestrians from Howard Street via an existing entrance. A Transport Assessment Form was submitted with the application and details of a travel plan and a service management plan have been outlined in the Design and access statement. The site is detailed as being well served by transport (adjacent to Victoria Street Rail Station/Europa Bus Centre) and pedestrian walkways. The scale of development and transport implications of the proposal were assessed by Transport NI through this and they consider them to be acceptable. They offer conditions and informatives detailed below. The proposal therefore complies with Policy AMP 6 of PPS 3.

10.0 Summary of Recommendation: Approval

Having regard to the policy context and other material considerations above, the proposal is considered acceptable and planning permission is recommended subject to conditions for the following reasons.

The proposed change of use is considered acceptable in its locality, the extension to the Brunswick Street elevation is in keeping with the character of the Conservation Area. Statutory and non-statutory consultees have offered no objections subject to the conditions outlined below. Approval is recommended.

11.0 Conditions

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.

Reason: Time Limit.

2. Doors shall not open out over the public footway.

Reason: In the interests of pedestrian safety.

3. The development hereby permitted shall not become operational until an appropriate number of covered cycle parking facilities have been provided in accordance with the Design and Access Statement bearing the date stamp 15th December 2016.

Reason: To promote the use of alternative modes of transport in accordance with sustainable transportation principles.

4. The development hereby permitted shall operate in accordance with the Service Management Plan contained within the Design and Access Statement bearing the date stamp 15th December 2016.

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

5. A proprietary odour abatement system shall be installed to suppress and disperse odours created from cooking operations on the premises. The outlet from any extract ventilation shall terminate as detailed in drawing No.20 date stamped Planning Drawing No.20 date stamped 15th December, 2016. The extraction and ventilation system must be cleaned and maintained in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions to ensure compliance with the above condition.

Reason: in the interest of amenity

Informatives

1. All construction plant and materials shall be stored within the curtilage of the site.
2. Notwithstanding the terms and conditions of the Planning Authority's approval set out above, you are required under Article 71-83 inclusive of the Roads (NI) Order 1993 to be

in possession of the Department for Infrastructure's consent before any work is commenced which involves making or altering any opening to any boundary adjacent to the public road, verge, or footway or any part of said road, verge, or footway bounding the site. The consent is available on personal application to the Transport NI Section Engineer whose address is: Belfast North Section Office, 148-158 Corporation Street, Belfast, BT1 3DH. A monetary deposit will be required to cover works on the public road.

3. CLEAN NEIGHBOURHOODS AND ENVIRONMENT ACT (NORTHERN IRELAND) 2011

The applicant is advised to ensure that all plant and equipment used in connection with the hotel and cafe unit is so situated, operated and maintained as to prevent the transmission of noise to nearby commercial units.

4. THE SMOKING (NORTHERN IRELAND) ORDER 2006

This Service would advise that it is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that any proposed smoking areas complies with the requirements of The Smoking (Northern Ireland) Order 2006. Advice on compliance is available from The Councils Smoking Control Officers.

ANNEX	
Date Valid	23rd December 2016
Date First Advertised	13th January 2017
Date Last Advertised	
<p>Details of Neighbour Notification (all addresses)</p> <p>1-3 Howard House, Brunswick Street, Town Parks, Belfast, Antrim, BT2 7GE, 10 Brunswick Street, Town Parks, Belfast, Antrim, BT2 7GE, 18-20, Howard Street, Town Parks, Belfast, Antrim, BT1 6PA, 24, 27, 30, 32, 34, 42, 44, 46, 48, Howard Street, Town Parks, Belfast, Antrim, BT1 6PA, 56-66 Queens Court, Upper Queen Street, Town Parks, Belfast, Antrim, BT1 6FD, 7, 8 Brunswick Street, Town Parks, Belfast, Antrim, BT2 7GE, Abacus, Dax House, 22 Howard Street, Town Parks, Belfast, Antrim, BT1 6PA, Andrew Watson Menswear, 11 Upper Queen Street, Belfast, BT1 6NB Assembly Buildings, 2-10 Fisherwick Place, Belfast, BT1 6PG Blue Arrow, Windmill Restaurant, Rose Building, Belfast, BT7 1RS Centra (Musgrave Retail Partners NI), 2-4 Great Victoria Street, Belfast, BT2 7HR Close Brothers, Dax House, 22 Howard Street, Town Parks, Belfast, Antrim, BT1 6PA, Dax House, 22 Howard Street, Town Parks, Belfast, Antrim, BT1 6FQ, Deanes, 36-40, Howard Street, Town Parks, Belfast, Antrim, BT1 6PF, Department For Communities, 1-7 Bedford Street, Belfast, BT1 6PG Etain Software, 21 James Street South, Belfast, BT2 7GA GVA, Windmill Restaurant, Rose Building, Belfast, BT7 1RS Hire Class, 29 Howard Street, Town Parks, Belfast, Antrim, BT1 6NB, Howard Buildings, 26 Howard Street, Town Parks, Belfast, Antrim, BT1 6PD, Howard Street Restaurant, 56 Howard Street, Town Parks, Belfast, Antrim, BT1 6PG, James Street South, 21 James Street South, Belfast, BT2 7GA Medicare Esler's Pharmacy, 42 Howard Street, Town Parks, Belfast, Antrim, BT1 6PG, Merrion Business Centre, 56 Howard Street, Town Parks, Belfast, Antrim, BT1 6PG, North Gentleman's Outfitters Ltd, 54 Howard Street, Town Parks, Belfast, Antrim, BT1 Oasis Travel, Dax House, 22 Howard Street, Town Parks, Belfast, Antrim, BT1 6PA, Richard Owens Opticians, 58 Howard Street, Town Parks, Belfast, Antrim, BT1 6PG, Rogue Hairdressers, 58 Howard Street, Town Parks, Belfast, Antrim, BT1 6PG, Shields House, 21 James Street South, Town Parks, Belfast, Antrim, BT2 7GA, Simple Power, Rose Building, Belfast, BT7 1RS Supershop And Post Office, Windmill Restaurant, Rose Building, Belfast, BT7 1RS TNT Tours, 48 Howard Street, Town Parks, Belfast, Antrim, BT1 6PG, The Bakery Deli And Cafe, 52 Howard Street, Town Parks, Belfast, Antrim, BT1 6PG, The Bible Society, 27 Howard Street, Belfast, BT1 6NB Windmill Restaurant, Rose Building, Belfast, BT7 1RS</p>	
Date of Last Neighbour Notification	13th January 2017
Date of EIA Determination	N/A

ES Requested	N/A
Planning History None Relevant	
Drawing Numbers and Title 01 – Site Location 02 – Site Layout 07(a) – Proposed Ground Floor Plan 08(a) - Proposed First Floor Plan 09(a) - Proposed Second Floor Plan 10(a) - Proposed Third Floor Plan 13(a) – Proposed North and West Elevations 14(a) – Proposed South Elevation 18(a) – Proposed Sections 19(a) - Proposed Sections 20(a) - Proposed Sections	
Notification to Department (if relevant) Date of Notification to Department: Response of Department:	