

Development Management Officer Report Committee Application

Summary	
Committee Meeting Date: 20 th June 2017	
Application ID: LA04/2017/0497/F	
Proposal: Change of use of existing office accommodation to provide 30-bedroom hotel accommodation with roof extension/ roof terrace including a bar and associated screening forming an extension to the neighbouring hotel at 40a Church Lane, Belfast	Location: Annsgate House 70-74 Ann Street Belfast BT1 4EH/40-42 Church Lane Belfast
Referral Route: Proposal is for a 30-bedroom hotel	
Recommendation:	Approval
Applicant Name and Address: Cathedral Leisure Ltd 3 Hill Street Belfast BT1 2LA	Agent Name and Address: ADO (Belfast) Ltd 67 Edenderry Village Belfast BT8 8LQ
<p>Executive Summary:</p> <p>This application seeks full planning permission for the change of use of existing office accommodation to provide 30-bedroom hotel accommodation with roof extension and creation of roof terrace including a bar and associated screening forming an extension to the neighbouring hotel at 40a Church Lane, Belfast.</p> <p>The key issues in the assessment of this application are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Acceptability of proposed use and loss of offices - Design, impact on character of the surrounding area, City Centre Conservation Area and setting of Listed Buildings - Impact on area of archaeological potential - Impact on existing roads infrastructure/ acceptability of access arrangements - Impact upon amenity of neighbouring properties and future occupants - Flooding <p>The proposal has been assessed against the following Policies – Strategic Planning Policy for Northern Ireland, Planning Policy Statement 4: Planning and Economic Development, Planning Policy Statement 3: Access Movement and Parking and Planning Policy Statement 6: Planning, Archaeology and the Built Heritage, Draft BMAP and Belfast Urban Area Plan.</p>	

Transport NI, NI Water, Historic Environment Division and the Council's Environmental Protection Unit have offered no objections to the proposal and standard conditions are to be applied. The Council's Conservation Officer has no objection to the change of use or creation of roof terrace however they have highlighted concern with the roof extension. The submitted Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) is currently being reviewed by Rivers Agency and their response will be reported as an update to committee.

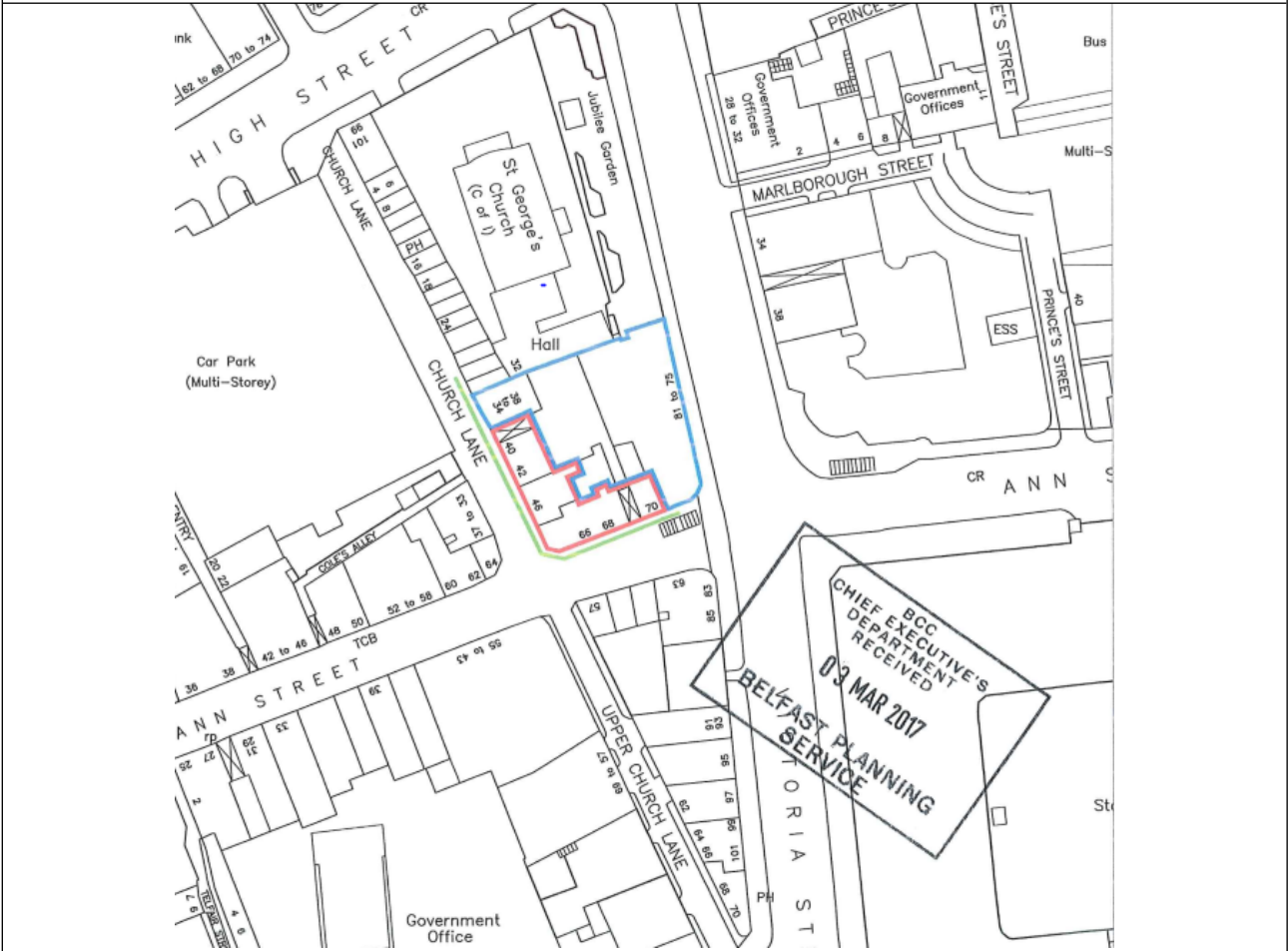
No letters of objection have been received.

The site is located within Belfast City Centre. It is also within the City Centre Conservation Area and the Old City Character Area. The proposed hotel use is compatible with its city centre location and the loss of office space is not considered to be detrimental given its recent underuse, the existing supply of office within the city centre and the many benefits associated with the proposed hotel extension. The concerns of the Council's Conservation Officer are noted, however on balance it is considered that the proposal would represent an overall enhancement to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and surrounding area.

The proposal is considered to be in accordance with the development plan, relevant planning policies and other material considerations and as such it is recommended that the proposal should be approved subject to conditions.

Case Officer Report

Site Location Plan



1.0 Description of Proposed Development
 This application seeks planning permission for the change of use of the existing office accommodation to provide 30-bedroom hotel accommodation with roof extension and creation of a roof terrace including a bar and associating screening to form an extension to the neighbouring hotel at 40a Church Lane (known as Bullit Hotel).

 Amended plans were submitted during the course of the application with the re-configuration of the rooftop bar layout.

2.0 Description of Site
 The site comprises of a 4 storey building at the corner of Church Lane and Ann Street and an adjoining 3 storey building along Church Lane with commercial units and a public house on the ground floor and offices on the upper floors. The surrounding area is of a commercial nature. The site is located within Belfast City Centre Conservation Area.

Planning Assessment of Policy and other Material Considerations

3.0 Site History

 No relevant history on application site

Existing Bullit Hotel
 LA04/2015/0675/F – Change of use and extension of existing office building to provide hotel accommodation (58 bedrooms) – Granted 08.01.2016

	<p>LA04/2016/1797/A - 2 no. Projecting Hotel Signs with additional flush fitting at first floor level – Granted 22.02.2017</p> <p>LA04/2017/0936/F - Change of use of 4th floor from hotel to bar, 4th floor extension and elevation changes – Pending</p>
4.0	Policy Framework
4.1	<p>Belfast Urban Area Plan 2001 (BUAP) (Draft) Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan</p> <p>Following the recent Court of Appeal decision on BMAP, the extant development plan is now the BUAP. However, given the stage at which the Draft BMAP had reached pre-adoption through a period of independent examination, the policies within the Draft BMAP still carry weight and are a material consideration in the determination of planning applications. The weight to be afforded is a matter of judgement for the decision maker.</p>
4.2	<p>Regional Development Strategy Strategic Planning Policy Statement for Northern Ireland Planning Policy Statement 3 - Access, Movement and Parking Planning Policy Statement 4 – Planning and Economic Development Planning Policy Statement 15 – Planning and Flood Risk</p>
5.0	Statutory Consultees
	<p>Historic Environment Division (HED) – No objection NI Water – No objection subject to conditions Rivers Agency – Awaiting response, will be reported as an update to committee Transport NI - No objection subject to conditions</p>
6.0	Non-Statutory Consultees
	<p>Environmental Health BCC – No objection Conservation Officer BCC – No objection to proposed change of use / internal reconfiguration and roof terrace. Highlighted concern over stairwell and toilet block, in that it would represent a contextually inappropriate roof form. Recommended enhancement of the existing building façade</p>
7.0	Representations
	None received
8.0	Other Material Considerations
	City Centre Conservation Area guidance document
9.0	Assessment
9.1	<p>The key issues in the assessment of the proposed development include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Acceptability of proposed use and loss of offices - Design, impact on character and appearance of City Centre Conservation Area and setting of Listed Buildings - Impact on area of archaeological potential - Impact on existing roads infrastructure/ acceptability of access arrangements - Impact upon amenity of neighbouring properties and future occupants - Flooding
9.2	<p><u>Acceptability of proposed use and loss of offices</u></p> <p>There is no major policy conflict in respect of the approach to city centre uses and the loss of office space in the BUAP, Draft BMAP and the SPPS. The site is located within the development limits of the city centre and as such there is a presumption in favour of development. The proposed hotel extension with rooftop bar would bring back the vacant upper floors of the buildings into active use and would help to further enhance the vitality and viability of the city centre. Whilst there would be a loss of office space, given the underuse of the existing offices in recent years, the existing supply of offices within the city centre and the undoubted contribution to the local economy that the proposed hotel extension would bring, on balance the proposal is deemed acceptable on what is a prime</p>

	<p>city centre site ideally situated for such a use. The proposal is considered to accord with Policy PED7 of PPS4, BUAP, Draft BAMP and the SPPS in this regard.</p>
	<p><u>Design, impact on character and appearance of the City Centre Conservation Area and setting of Listed Buildings</u></p>
9.3	<p>The works to the existing building are mainly limited to internal conversion works to provide the 30 guestroom extension to the adjoining hotel. The main impact is from the roof extension prefinished in metal cladding at a maximum height of 2.7 metres which would front onto Ann Street and the roof terrace bar/ store fronting onto Church Lane. The Conservation Officer has no objection per se to the creation of the terrace, however they have highlighted some concern with the roof extension stating that it would represent a contextually inappropriate roof structure in the context of the host building and surrounding area.</p>
9.4	<p>The location of the stairwell is dictated by the existing stairwell within the building and the extension would be of a similar form and scale to the extension approved on the adjoining hotel and would step down to the corner with Church Lane. The proposed extension would represent a relatively low key addition to a 1960s office building and a materials condition has been recommended to secure the use of high quality materials. The existing building at present is of low significance in terms of architectural merit and contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area. This proposal would bring back this vacant building into active use and given the low key nature of the proposed extension/terrace providing attractive roof planting along its edges which would help towards modernising what is an outdated building, overall it is considered that the proposal would result in an enhancement to the character and appearance of the City Centre Conservation Area and surrounding area in accordance with Policy BH12 of PPS6 and the SPPS.</p>
9.5	<p>The site is located within the Old City Character Area (Policy CC 012) as designated in the Draft BMAP which sets out a number of urban design criteria for the area. However, as this proposal is mainly a change of use with a roof extension, the urban design criteria is not directly applicable in this case as it is primarily for new build proposals.</p>
9.6	<p>There are a number of nearby listed buildings in the vicinity of the application site including 57 Ann Street (Grade B2) and St George's Church (Grade A). However given the separation distances, intervening buildings and the nature of the works which do not affect the scale and massing of the existing building to a significant extent, it is considered that the proposal would not be harmful to the setting of the nearby listed buildings in accordance with Policy BH11 of the of PPS6. HED were consulted on the planning application and have no objection.</p>
	<p><u>Impact on area of archaeological potential</u></p>
9.7	<p>The site is located within an area of archaeological potential. The proposed works are limited to above ground level only. Subsequently there are no archaeological implications associated with the scheme. HED were consulted and had no objection. As such the proposal is considered to accord with Policy BH4 of PPS6 and the SPPS.</p>
	<p><u>Impact on existing roads, infrastructure/ acceptability of access arrangements</u></p>
9.8	<p>A Transport Assessment Form has been submitted in support of the application. No car parking is to be provided as part of the development, however the proposal would result in less vehicle movement than the existing office use. Furthermore, the site is within a highly sustainable location which is supported by a wide range of amenities and public transport links. This approach accords with the SPPS to help reduce the reliance on the use of private car. A Travel and Service Management Plan was approved as part of the existing hotel and conditions have been recommended to secure this as part of the current scheme. Transport NI were consulted and have no objection subject to conditions. The proposal is</p>

<p>9.9</p> <p>9.10</p> <p>9.11</p>	<p>therefore considered to be acceptable with regards to car parking, capacity and highway safety and would comply with PPS3 and the SPPS.</p> <p><u>Impact on amenity of neighbouring properties and future occupants</u></p> <p>Due to the small scale nature and positioning of the roof extensions, it would not cause a significant loss of light and overshadowing to neighbouring properties. The surrounding properties are primarily of a commercial nature and as such no concerns are raised in respect of overlooking or loss of privacy.</p> <p>It is acknowledged that the proposal involves the creation of a rooftop bar which has the potential for noise disturbance. However, there are no residential properties in close proximity to the application site and given the commercial nature of the area, it is not considered that it would have a detrimental impact upon amenity. The most sensitive receptors would be guests within the hotel, however this is a matter for the applicant to ensure that noise and any anti-social behaviour is appropriately managed. Environmental Heath were consulted on the application and considered the proposed development in terms of noise, air pollution, general amenity, ambient air quality and contaminated land and have advised that they have no objection.</p> <p><u>Flooding</u></p> <p>The application site lies within the 1 in 200 year coastal flood plain of Belfast Lough. Whilst the proposal does not fall neatly into one of the exceptions specified under Policy FLD1 for development within the coastal flood plain, weight must be attached to the fact it involves a change of use to an existing building within the city centre and no guest accommodation is located on the ground floor with all bedrooms on the 1st floor and above. It is therefore considered that the proposal is in broad compliance with Policy FLD 1 and the SPPS which was the approach accepted under the planning application for the neighbouring hotel under reference LA04/2015/0675/F. Subsequently an updated Floor Risk Assessment (FRA) has been submitted based on the FRA for the existing hotel which was deemed acceptable. This is currently being reviewed by the Rivers Agency and their response will be reported as an update to committee. The proposal is considered to comply with PPS15 and the SPPS.</p>
<p>10.0</p>	<p>Conditions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 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. The development hereby permitted shall not commence until details and/or samples and a written specification of the materials to be used in the external elevations, have been submitted to an approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be carried out and thereafter retained in accordance with the approved details. Reason: To protect the visual amenities of the area including the conservation area. 3. The development hereby permitted shall not commence until soft landscaping details of the roof planting has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority which specifies species, planting sizes and numbers of trees/ shrubs and hedges to be planted. All landscaping shall be carried out in accordance with the approved scheme in the first planting season (November-March) following the occupation of the buildings or the completion of the

	<p>development whichever is the sooner and maintained thereafter. Any retained or newly planted trees, shrubs or hedges which die, become seriously damaged or diseased or are removed or destroyed within a period of 5 years from the date of planting shall be replaced during the next planting season with specimens of the same size and species unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.</p> <p>Reason: In the interests of amenity and biodiversity and to preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the locality.</p> <p>4. The development hereby permitted shall not become operational until an updated Travel Plan has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall thereafter be operated in accordance with the approved Travel Plan.</p> <p>Reason: To promote the use of alternative modes of transport in accordance with sustainable transportation principles.</p> <p>5. The development hereby permitted shall not become operational until an updated Service Management Plan has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall thereafter be operated in accordance with the approved Service Management Plan.</p> <p>Reason: In the interests of road safety and the convenience of road users.</p> <p>6. Doors shall not open out over the public footway.</p> <p>Reason: In the interests of pedestrian safety.</p>
	<p>Neighbour Notification Checked Yes</p>

ANNEX	
Date Valid	7th March 2017
Date First Advertised	17th March 2017
Date Last Advertised	5th May 2017
Details of Neighbour Notification (all addresses) The Owner/Occupier, 22, 28, 30, 35,40, 42, Church Lane, Town Parks, Belfast, Antrim, BT1 4QN, 43-45, 46, 55, 57-59, 60-62, 63, 64, 66, 70-74, 75-81, 76, 80, Ann Street, Town 83 , 85 Victoria Street, Town Parks, Belfast, Antrim, BT1 4PB, Canston House, 38 Church Lane, Town Parks, Belfast, Antrim, BT1 4QH, Lagan House, 79 Victoria Street, Town Parks, Belfast, Antrim, BT1 3GN, St George's Parish Church (c Of I), High Street, Town Parks, Belfast, Antrim, BT1 2AG,	
Date of Last Neighbour Notification	10th May 2017
Date of EIA Determination	N/A
ES Requested	No
Drawing Numbers and Title: 01, 07, 08, 09, 10A, 11A, 12	