

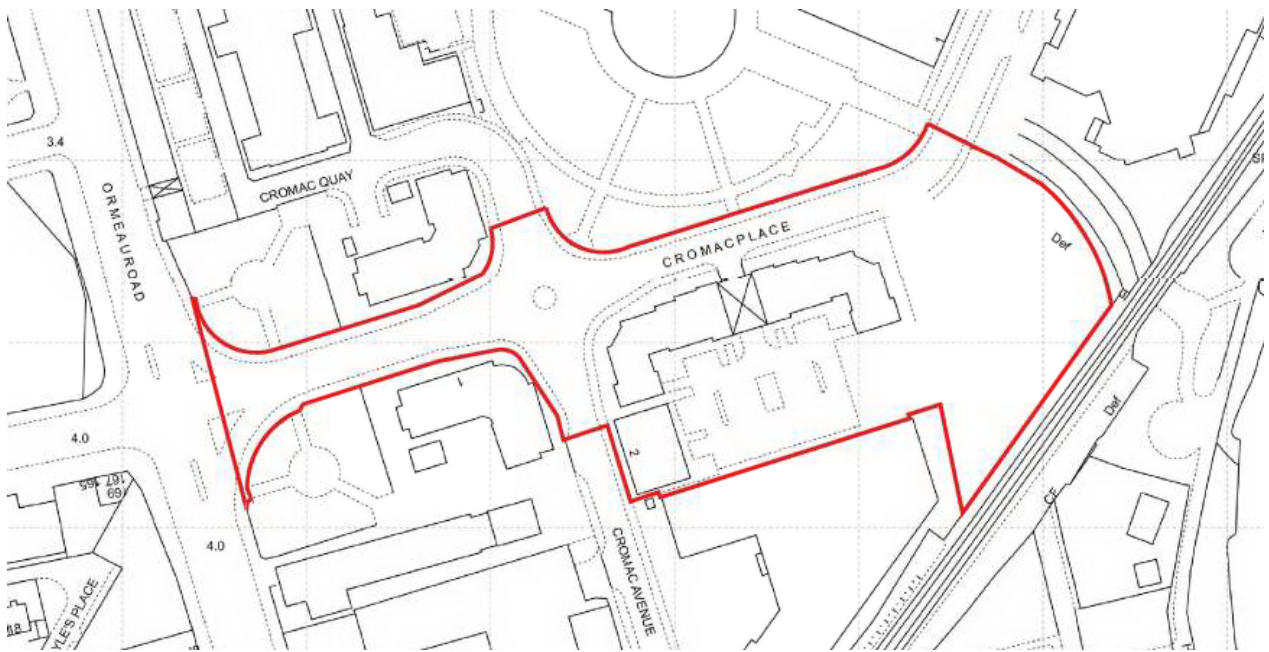
## Development Management Officer Report Committee Application

<b>Summary</b>	
<b>Committee Meeting Date:</b> 11 December 2018	
<b>Application ID:</b> LA04/2018/1453/F	
<b>Proposal:</b> 6. storey Grade A office development, incorporating a ground floor coffee bar, associated car parking, part retention and reconfiguration of existing car park, and all ancillary site works and landscaping.	<b>Location:</b> Lands at and adjacent to plot 4 Cromac Place The Gas Works Belfast BT7 2JD
<b>Referral Route:</b> Major Application on land owned by Belfast City Council.	
<b>Recommendation:</b>	Approval
<b>Applicant Name and Address:</b> Cromac Quay Ltd Ground Floor 1 Cromac Quay Belfast BT7 2JD	<b>Agent Name and Address:</b> WYG Planning 1 Locksley Business Park Montgomery Road Belfast BT6 9UP
<p><b>Executive Summary:</b> This application seeks full permission for a 6No. storey Grade A office development, incorporating a ground floor coffee bar, associated car parking, part retention and reconfiguration of existing car park, and all ancillary site works and landscaping</p> <p>The key issues in the assessment of the proposal are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- principle of use on the site</li> <li>- Access, movement, parking and transportation, including road safety</li> <li>- Design and impact</li> <li>- Flood risk</li> <li>- Contaminated land</li> <li>- Impact on Built Heritage</li> </ul> <p>The site is located on lands at and adjacent to plot 4 Cromac Place, The Gas Works, Belfast.</p> <p>The majority of the site displays an existing office building, 6-16 Cromac Place whereas the remainder of the site is currently in use as a car park. The site is situated within Belfast City Centre.</p> <p>The proposal has been assessed against and is considered to comply with the Strategic Planning Policy Statement for Northern Ireland (SPPS), Belfast Urban Area Plan 2001 (BUAP), Draft Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan 2015 (BMAP), PPS2, PPS3, PPS4, PPS6, PPS13 and PPS15</p> <p>Whilst all statutory consultees have raised no issues of principle, the BCC Urban Design Officer had expressed concern with respect to elements of the design of the proposal. Given the character of the area it was considered the design was acceptable at this location. At the time of writing this report both DAERA Land and Groundwater Team and Shared Environmental Services had not yet responded.</p>	

Accordingly, it is recommended that the proposal is approved subject to the conditions set out in the report and it is requested that committee delegate authority to the Director of Planning and Building Control to finalise the wording of conditions.

## Case Officer Report

### Site Location Plan



### Characteristics of the Site and Area

#### 1.0 Description of Proposed Development

Erection of 6No. storey Grade A office development, incorporating a ground floor coffee bar, associated car parking, part retention and reconfiguration of existing car park, and all ancillary site works and landscaping.

#### 2.0 Description of Site

The site is located at lands at and adjacent to plot 4, Cromac Place, The Gas Works, Belfast. The red line of the site extends from the entrance to the site from the Ormeau Road, the existing 6-16 Cromac Place building (5 storey at its highest point), and its associated car park to the rear, as well as an existing car park directly adjacent. The site measures 1.22ha, however the area of the Plot 4 site to be developed is 0.34ha. The boundary with Cromac Place itself is undefined with a metal fencing along south eastern boundary which abuts the railway line. The existing building is mainly red brick with render on the ground floor. The site is situated within Belfast City Centre on white land as designated within (Draft) Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan (BMAP) 2015 and Belfast Urban Area Plan 2001 (BUAP). This planning application relates to the area of existing car park.

### Planning Assessment of Policy and Other Material Considerations

#### 3.0 Site History

There is a planning history on the existing car park under Z/2008/0518/F for "Proposed 9-storey, 169-bed courtyard hotel incorporating restaurant, bar, dry fitness, small meeting rooms, access and servicing arrangements" which was granted permission on 15/11/10. This has since expired.

There is also a current application under LA04/2016/2267/F for "Erection of office building (ranging in height from four to six storeys) and associated access road, re-configuration of existing car park and ancillary works" to the north of the site.

#### **4.0 Policy Framework**

- 4.1 (Draft) Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan (BMAP) 2015 and Belfast Urban Area Plan 2001 (BUAP)
- 4.2 Belfast City Centre
- 4.3 Strategic Planning Policy Statement (SPPS)
- 4.4 Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 2: Natural Heritage
- 4.5 Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 3: Access, Movement and Parking
- 4.6 Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 4: Planning and Economic Development
- 4.7 Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 6: Planning, Archaeology and the Built Heritage
- 4.8 Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 13: Transportation and Land Use.
- 4.9 Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 15: Planning and Flood Risk

#### **5.0 Statutory Consultees Responses**

- 5.1 DFI Roads Service - No objection subject to conditions
- 5.2 DfC HED Historic Buildings – No objection
- 5.3 DfC HED Historic Monuments – No objection subject to conditions
- 5.4 NI Water – No objection
- 5.5 DAERA Regulation Unit – No response at time of writing
- 5.6 DAERA Water Management – No objection
- 5.7 DFI Rivers Agency – No objection

#### **6.0 Non Statutory Consultees Responses**

- 6.1 Belfast City Council (BCC) Environmental Health - No objection subject to conditions
- 6.2 Belfast City Council (BCC) Urban Design Officer – No objection but issues raised
- 6.3 Shared Environmental services – No response at time of writing
- 6.4 Translink – No objection

#### **7.0 Representations**

- 7.1 The application has been neighbour notified and advertised in the local press. No comments have been received.

#### **8.0 Other Material Considerations**

- 8.1 Parking Standards

#### **9.0 Assessment**

9.1 Following the recent Court of Appeal decision relating to Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan (BMAP) 2015, the extant development plan is now the Belfast Urban Area Plan 2001 (BUAP). However, given the stage at which the Draft BMAP (dBMAP) had reached pre-adoption through a period of independent examination, the policies within the dBMAP 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. The site is located inside the development limits of Belfast as shown in the BUAP and dBMAP.

9.2 The site is located within Belfast City Centre as designated in BUAP and dBMAP, which is the main office area. The proposed development will develop the existing site by erecting a six storey mixed use building (restaurant and office). The development includes car parking over 2 levels to the rear of the site adjacent to the railway lines. The proposed building is 28.4m (approx.) high at the highest point. The plans show the ground floor as a coffee shop with entrance foyer, office space and car parking. The floor above this includes a mezzanine and more car parking with the all other upper floors as office space. The top floor is 'set back'.

9.3 The key issues are:

- principle of use on the site
- Access, movement, parking and transportation, including road safety
- Design and impact

- Flood risk
- Contaminated land
- Impact on Built Heritage
- Other Environmental matters

#### **9.4 Principle of use on the site**

The site is within the city centre in BUAP, dBMAP and the version of BMAP purported to be adopted. Office use on the site is acceptable in principle as the development plan and PPS4 identifies Belfast City Centre as the first choice location for office development. The portion of the site to be developed is currently in use as a surface car park. It is considered that the redevelopment of this site will provide grade A office floorspace and represent a more productive use of this city centre site, subject to the consideration and resolution of planning and environmental matters. Since part of the site displays an existing office building the use has already been partially established. The ground floor use as a coffee shop within this city centre location surrounded by a mix of uses (nearby retail and bars) will bring increased vitality and viability into the area. Therefore the principle of use at this location is acceptable.

#### **9.5 Access, Movement, Parking and Transportation**

The basement parking is entered via a proposed vehicular access to the side of the proposed building. This is accessed via the roadway leading from the existing car park to the rear of the existing Cromac Place building. There is a small number of surface level spaces provided as well as cycle storage for 80 cycles. DfI Roads has no objections subject to conditions should approval be granted. The proposal is considered acceptable when assessed against Policy AMP 2 of PPS3 and DCAN 15.

9.6 A Transport Assessment Form, Travel Plan and Service Management Plan were submitted. BMAP Policy TRAN 1 notes that one space per 300 square metres for operational space should be provided in this Area of Parking Restraint. 82 parking spaces have been proposed with this development within Plot 4 and the existing car parking to the rear of the existing Cromac Place building remains unchanged. This number of proposed spaces exceeds that suggested by guidance. The site benefits from a high level of pedestrian accessibility to local public transport. The scale of development and transport implications of the proposal were assessed by DfI Roads and are considered to be acceptable.

9.7 A total of 80 secure and overlooked cycle parking spaces are proposed adjacent to the front entrance of the development. The cycle network in the area is already well established with a number of dedicated cycling facilities adjacent to the site. There is also planning approval under LA04/2015/0405/F for "Pedestrian and cycle bridge (5.0m between parapets) with combined foot and cycle ramps from close to railway underpass on west bank to quay on east bank; pedestrian and cycle links to existing routes, car park, storm drainage, lighting and landscaping" at Lower Ormeau Embankment and River Terrace which will improve connectivity of pedestrians and cyclist to the site with amenities further afield should it be realised. The Travel Plan outlines a range of methods that will be implemented to encourage and facilitate the use of sustainable modes of transport. DfI has suggested a condition to be attached ensuring that 80 spaces are provided and retained.

#### **9.8 Design and Impact**

The proposed building is 6 storeys high with a curved frontage following the footpath at the bend in Cromac Place. As already stated the top floor is stepped in. There is a tower feature proposed to the north western corner of the site. The main entrance is to the front of the building from Cromac Place (north-west elevation) with an additional entrance to the side (south-west elevation). There is a proposed arcade area on the other side (north-east elevation) which leads off the proposed coffee shop. The arcade opens onto an area of public open space with steps to the walkway proposed to link with the planned pedestrian and cyclists bridge.

9.9 There is a wide variety of building styles, materials and heights within the Gasworks ranging from 5 to 9 storeys (e.g. 6-16 Cromac Place, to Radisson Blu Hotel). The proposed height of 6 storeys is acceptable for the site and within the area. The building is of a modern design with three distinct sections to the front, namely the tower/colonnade, curved section/entrance and set back element adjacent to the Cromac Place building.

9.10 The BCC Urban Design Officer supplied detailed comments throughout the PAD process for the proposal. The application submitted does not depart greatly from what was discussed during the PAD and therefore comments provided previously are applicable. Whilst the scheme was amended during the PAD stage and overall the changes were welcomed, the Urban Design Officer had expressed concerns about the rear elevation of the building since it will be visible from public view points along the river. It was suggested the façade could be architecturally broken up in a similar approach to the front elevation. The rear elevation displays vertical emphasis in its fenestration and although not as architecturally interesting as the front elevation it is considered on balance acceptable at this location and in the context of existing modern office buildings.

9.11 The proposed materials are aluminium profiled sections with integral aluminium curtain walling glazing system as well as solid panels where necessary to also be aluminium finish. The proposed materials are considered acceptable for the area which is characterised by a variety of building types and elevation treatment.

#### **9.12 Flood Risk**

DfI Rivers Agency considered a submitted Flood Risk Assessment and advised that they had no reason to disagree with its conclusions and suggested informatives to be attached should approval be granted. The proposal therefore complies with PPS15.

#### **9.13 Contaminated Land**

Environmental Protection Unit of BCC reviewed a PRA and GQRA submitted relating to contaminated land and responded with conditions to be attached should approval be granted.

9.14 DEARA's Land and Groundwater Team however responded stating insufficient information had been provided as to the environmental risks from the development. The report submitted assumes the groundwater contamination is site wide and evidence needs to be provided from the groundwater quality data and conceptual site model that groundwater impacts originate outside of the planning area. Shared Environmental Service shares their concern and requested further information to enable the Habitats Regulations Assessment to be completed. The additional information was submitted to BCC Planning Service and forwarded to the appropriate Agencies. At the time of writing their responses are outstanding but it is considered that these issues do not impact on the principle of the development.

#### **9.15 Impact on Built Heritage**

The application site is located within a 19<sup>th</sup> century site of industrial heritage interest and within the vicinity of the 18<sup>th</sup> century 'Cromack Dock and therefore HED Historic Monuments were consulted. They are content with the proposal on the condition that no site works shall take place until a programme of archaeological work has been implemented. This shall be conditioned should approval be granted. The site is within the vicinity of 3 listed buildings, those being the Meter House, Klondyke Building and The Gas Office. HED Historic Buildings confirmed that the site is already within an area of the gas works sites where there a number of other tall buildings and reflecting on design amendments since the PAD stage they consider the proposal satisfies the requirements of PPS6.

#### **9.16 Other Environmental Matters**

An air quality assessment was submitted, and as a result BCC EPU has no objection to the proposal from an air quality perspective during the operation phase and also on future residents along the Ormeau Road.

9.16 Details of the odour abatement system cannot be provided at present as there is no tenant for the ground floor. The outlets of any future extract ventilation shall be conditioned to terminate at a height not less than 1m above the main roof line.

#### **9.17 Developer Contributions**

The proposed development falls within the Major application category and consideration was given to the need for developer contributions to mitigate the development on the site. Taking into account the site location within an existing business park with established public realm and its limited site frontage, it was considered that it was not necessary to require a contribution or works to upgrade the public realm abutting the site.

#### **9.18 Economic Benefit**

The Planning Design and Access Statement submitted in support of the proposal states the development will provide over 9000 sqm which will in turn provide hundreds of office based jobs with of course a number of short term construction jobs, bringing an injection of vitality to this area of Belfast City Centre.

#### **10.0 Conclusion**

10.1 Having regard to the policy context and other material considerations above, the proposal is considered acceptable and planning permission is recommended for approval subject to conditions. It is recommended that the delegated authority is given to the Director of Planning and Building Control to finalize the wording of conditions.

**Neighbour Notification Checked: Yes**

#### **Conditions**

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. Prior to occupation of the proposed development, the applicant shall provide to the Planning Service, for approval, a Verification Report. This report must demonstrate that the remediation measures outlined in Section 6 of the Pentland MacDonald Ltd report titled 'Updated Contamination Assessment and Outline Remediation Strategy for Plot 4, Cromac Place, Belfast Gasworks (planning ref: LA04/2018/1453/F)' dated September 2018 and referenced: PM18-1151) have been implemented.

The Verification Report shall demonstrate the successful completion of remediation works and that the site is now fit for the proposed end-use. It must demonstrate that the identified potential pollutant linkages are effectively broken. The Verification Report shall be in accordance with current best practice and guidance as outlined by the Environment Agency. In particular, this Verification Report must demonstrate that:

a. The final development site layout is as per Appendix I of the Pentland MacDonald Ltd report titled: 'Updated Contamination Assessment and Outline Remediation Strategy for Plot 4, Cromac Place, Belfast Gasworks (planning ref: LA04/2018/1453/F)' dated September 2018 (referenced PM18-1151).

b. The capping layer as detailed in Section 6 of the PM Ltd report dated September 2018, referenced PM18-1151 has been installed in all proposed landscaped areas. Materials used

within this cover system must be adequately proven to be suitable for the relevant end-use scenario (public open space – parks) and have a proven total depth of no less than 500mm.

c. Documentary validation evidence of the cover system must be in line with the recommendations outlined in Section 6 of the PM Ltd PM18-1151 report and demonstrate soil sampling of the capping material at a suitable frequency in line with relevant available guidance on the verification of capping layers.

d. Gas protection measures that achieve a score of at least 4 as per table 4 of BS8485 have been installed in the proposed buildings to include as a minimum the following:

- A passively ventilated under-floor void;
- A cast in-situ concrete floor slab;
- A proprietary gas and vapour resistant membrane, installed and verified in line with CIRIA C735 – ‘Good Practice on the testing and verification of protection systems for buildings against hazardous ground gases’;
- That all water services have been installed above the water table and / or installed with reference to the UK Water Industry Research’s (UKWIR) 2010 document ‘Guidance for the selection of water supply pipes to be used in brownfield sites.’

Reason: Protection of human health

3. Prior to fit-out and operation of the proposed ground floor café, the applicant must submit to the Planning Service, full specification details for the proposed kitchen extraction and odour abatement system for review and approval in writing.

Reason: Protection of Residential Amenity

4. The development hereby permitted shall not become operational until hard surfaced area have been constructed in accordance with the approved layout Drawing No. 09 ‘Proposed Parking, P110B’ published by Belfast City Council Planning Office on 09 October 2018 to provide adequate facilities for servicing and parking within the site. No part of these hard surfaced areas shall be used for any purpose at any time than for parking, cycle storage circulation of traffic and servicing.

Reason: To ensure that adequate provision has been made for cycle storage and servicing.

5. A minimum of 80 No. cycle parking spaces shall be provided and permanently retained within the site in an accessible location for use by residents, staff and visitors to the development.

Reason: to encourage the use of alternative modes of transport for development users.

6. 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.

Reason: to ensure that archaeological remains within the application site are properly identified, and protected or appropriately recorded.

7. Access shall be afforded to the site at all reasonable times to any archaeologist nominated by the Department to observe the operations and to monitor the implementation of archaeological requirements.



Reason: to monitor programmed works in order to ensure that identification, evaluation and appropriate recording of any archaeological remains, or any other specific work required by condition, or agreement is satisfactorily completed.

## ANNEX

<b>Date Valid</b>	1st June 2018
<b>Date First Advertised</b>	22nd June 2018
<b>Date Last Advertised</b>	

### **Details of Neighbour Notification** (all addresses)

The Owner/Occupier,  
1a ,Cromac Place,Belfast,Antrim,BT7 2JB,  
The Owner/Occupier,  
3 Cromac Avenue,Belfast,Antrim,BT7 2JA,  
The Owner/Occupier,  
5 Cromac Avenue,Belfast,Antrim,BT7 2JA,  
The Owner/Occupier,  
Be Entertainment,The Belfast Office,5 Cromac Avenue,Belfast,Antrim,BT7 2JA,  
The Owner/Occupier,  
Big Lottery Fund,Offices 1st & 2nd Floor,1 Cromac Quay,Belfast,Antrim,BT7 2JD,  
The Owner/Occupier,  
Boys & Girls Clubs Of Northern Ireland,1-5 ,Coyles Place,Belfast,Antrim,BT7 1EL,  
The Owner/Occupier,  
Branlow,The Belfast Office,5 Cromac Avenue,Belfast,Antrim,BT7 2JA,  
The Owner/Occupier,  
Cannon,Office Front 1st Floor,1 Cromac Quay,Belfast,Antrim,BT7 2JD,  
The Owner/Occupier,  
Carleton House,1 Cromac Avenue,Belfast,Antrim,BT7 2JA,  
The Owner/Occupier,  
D.V.L.N.I.,Ground And 1st Floor,Carleton House,1 Cromac Avenue,Belfast,Antrim,BT7 2JA,  
The Owner/Occupier,  
Deloitte Technology Studio,7 Cromac Avenue,Belfast,Antrim,BT7 2JA,  
The Owner/Occupier,  
Department Of Social Security,2-4 James House,Cromac Avenue,Gasworks Business Park,Belfast,Antrim,BT7 2JA,  
The Owner/Occupier,  
Driver & Vehicle Licensing Agency,The Lighthouse,1 Cromac Place,Belfast,Antrim,BT7 2JB,  
The Owner/Occupier,  
Eastern Drugs And Alcohol Co-Ordination Team,Office 3 Ground Floor,1 Cromac Quay,Belfast,Antrim,BT7 2JD,  
The Owner/Occupier,  
Halifax Direct,Grd-3rd Floor,24 Cromac Place,Belfast,Antrim,BT7 2JB,  
The Owner/Occupier,  
Halifax,24 Cromac Place,Belfast,Antrim,BT7 2JB,  
The Owner/Occupier,  
Home Start South Belfast,1-5 ,Coyles Place,Belfast,Antrim,BT7 1EL,  
The Owner/Occupier,  
Ifm Planning,The Belfast Office,5 Cromac Avenue,Belfast,Antrim,BT7 2JA,

The Owner/Occupier,  
 Nevada Telecoms Ltd, Carleton House, 1 Cromac Avenue, Belfast, Antrim, BT7 2JA,  
 The Owner/Occupier,  
 New Opportunities Fund, 1 Cromac Quay, Belfast, Antrim, BT7 2JD,  
 The Owner/Occupier,  
 Next Level Impact, The Belfast Office, 5 Cromac Avenue, Belfast, Antrim, BT7 2JA,  
 The Owner/Occupier,  
 Ormeau Road, Ormeau, Belfast, Antrim, BT7 2EA,  
 The Owner/Occupier,  
 Part Two Design Ltd, 3 Cromac Avenue, Belfast, Antrim, BT7 2JA,  
 The Owner/Occupier,  
 Perfectum Technologies, The Belfast Office, 5 Cromac Avenue, Belfast, Antrim, BT7 2JA,  
 The Owner/Occupier,  
 Shelter (N I) Ltd, 1-5 , Coyles Place, Belfast, Antrim, BT7 1EL,  
 The Owner/Occupier,  
 South & East Health & Social Care, Office 1 Ground Floor, 1 Cromac Quay, Belfast, Antrim, BT7 2JD,  
 The Owner/Occupier,  
 South Belfast Economic Resource Centre Ltd, 1-5 , Coyles Place, Belfast, Antrim, BT7 1EL,  
 The Owner/Occupier,  
 St. Georges Youth & Community Development Ltd, 1-5 , Coyles Place, Belfast, Antrim, BT7 1EL,  
 The Owner/Occupier,  
 Sugarush Creative, The Belfast Office, 5 Cromac Avenue, Belfast, Antrim, BT7 2JA,  
 The Owner/Occupier,  
 The Lighthouse, 1 Cromac Place, Belfast, Antrim, BT7 2JB,  
 The Owner/Occupier,  
 The Lighthouse, The Lighthouse, 1 Cromac Place, Belfast, Antrim, BT7 2JB,  
 The Owner/Occupier,  
 The National Task Force, The Belfast Office, 5 Cromac Avenue, Belfast, Antrim, BT7 2JA,  
 The Owner/Occupier,  
 Vsg Security, Office 2 Ground Floor, 1 Cromac Quay, Belfast, Antrim, BT7 2JD,

<b>Date of Last Neighbour Notification</b>	29th November 2018
<b>Date of EIA Determination</b>	13th June 2018
<b>ES Requested</b>	No
<b>Notification to Department (if relevant)</b>	
Date of Notification to Department: N/A Response of Department:	