

Belfast's Grosvenor Road to get 14 storey office development

A proposal for a major office development on Belfast's Grosvenor Road has been given planning approval.

Belfast City Council's Planning Committee this week gave the green light for the demolition of an existing two storey building and the construction of a three block office development with heights of nine to 14 storeys with associated landscaping, parking, and other development. The site is next to Grosvenor Road PSNI station.

The reconsidered decision comes after a delay of over a year due to concerns from NI Water.

The site for the new office building, from an application by Ossian Holdings Ltd of Dungannon, is at 102-127 Grosvenor Road, adjoining the Westlink and Grosvenor Road Junction.

The company, which call the project "One Grosvenor Gate," said there will be 226,800 sq ft of "grade A" office space that could eventually house up to 2,500 workers on the site. The site is close to the proposed Belfast Transport Hub, currently under construction, which aims to be completed in 2025.

The Planning Committee granted planning permission for the application, in March 2021, but NI Water responded in June 2021, advising there was insufficient wastewater treatment capacity available for the proposed development.

NI Water wrote to the council last year: "Belfast WWTW no longer has headroom capacity to serve this proposal. However, initial improvement works currently under construction at Belfast WWTW, once completed, together with base maintenance

of the activated sludge process of the existing works, will result in providing some additional capacity in advance of the major phased upgrade of Belfast WWTW.”

Earlier this month NI Water wrote to the council: “Our only requirement is that this proposal shall not be occupied before July 1 2023, which is the date when additional treatment capacity will be available as a result of completion of the initial phase of upgrade work at Belfast WWTW.

“The developer has already confirmed to NI Water that this condition would be acceptable as this proposal will not be completed until after this date.”

The office building will replace a two storey redbrick building used by a plumbing and heating supplies company, and will generate an estimated 115 direct construction jobs.

The council planning report on the application states: “The proposed scheme comprises one building. Its form is essentially made up of a series of stepped components, a taller 14 storey element located at the western end of the site closest to the Westlink, an intermediary 11 storey element within which the main ground floor primary entrance is located, and finally a lower 9 storey component on the eastern edge of the site which aligns with the adjacent Stanley Street.”

Similar projects for the site have been in the air since 2005, with two previous office applications granted planning permission in 2011 and 2015 – both expired without development.

The latest application was approved this week at City Hall with unanimous support from elected representatives, and no discussion during the meeting.