

Belfast mega-office planned

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Plans for an office scheme at the Movie House cinema site in Belfast city centre will go to public consultation on 6 February.

Subject to planning approval, One Bankmore Square will become the largest office building in Northern Ireland.

The Richland Group is proposing to develop the 255,000 sq ft Grade A office scheme at Bankmore Square on the Dublin Road. It will include ground floor space for ancillary cafe, retail and leisure uses. Each floor plate will comprise of 25,000 sq ft of net useable space.

One Bankmore Square is close to Belfast City Hall and the new £250m Transport Hub for Belfast. The proposal also includes the transformation of Bankmore Square into a public open space with potential for an outdoor cinema and public art exhibitions.

The development cost of the building and Bankmore Square is estimated at £65m.

Gary McCausland, chief executive officer, Richland Group said: "One Bankmore Square will inject tens of millions of pounds into the local economy, create jobs, and rejuvenate an important part of Belfast city centre."

David Algie, Arup Belfast's MEP leader, said: "We have drawn lessons from the recent experiences of Arup Group colleagues in order to ensure that new approaches to building services design, sustainability and technology have been implemented in this exciting project."

Simon McEvoy, head of office agency at Savills, said: "The fundamentals that make Belfast an attractive to locate and expand remain unchanged: quality of staff, affordable accommodation, connectivity to multiple markets, pro-business city council and a stable market."

Dougie Wheeler, of joint agent Lambert Smith Hampton, said: "A development of the quality, scale and flexibility of One Bankmore Square is needed to ensure that this demand can be met as opposed to lost to other competing cities."

Subject to planning permission the scheme is expected to on site later this year for delivery late 2019.

Savills and Lambert Smith Hampton are joint agents.