

LISBURN & CASTLEREAGH CITY COUNCIL

Minutes of Planning Committee Meeting held in the Council Chamber and in Remote Locations on Wednesday, 18 February, 2026 at 2.03 pm

PRESENT IN CHAMBER:

Alderman J Tinsley (Chair)

Councillor G Thompson (Vice Chair)

Councillors S Burns, P Catney, D J Craig and N Trimble

IN ATTENDANCE:

Head of Planning & Capital Development
Principal Planning Officer (PS)
Environmental Health Officer (VE)
Member Services Officers (FA and EW)

Cleaver Fulton Rankin

Ms O Kelly, Legal Advisor

Commencement of Meeting

At the commencement of the meeting, the Chair, Alderman J Tinsley, welcomed those present to the Planning Committee. He pointed out that, unless the item on the agenda was considered under confidential business, this meeting would be audio recorded. The Head of Planning & Capital Development outlined the evacuation procedures in the case of an emergency.

1. **Apologies**

It was agreed to accept an apology for non-attendance at the meeting on behalf of Aldermen O Gawith and M Gregg and Councillors D Bassett, J Lavery and A Martin.

2. **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

3. **Report from the Head of Planning & Capital Development**

3.1 **Schedule of Applications**

The Chair, Alderman J Tinsley, advised that there were 3 local applications on the schedule for consideration at the meeting, and 1 had since been withdrawn.

3.1.1 Applications to be Determined

The Legal Advisor, Ms O Kelly, highlighted paragraphs 43-46 of the Protocol for the Operation of the Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council Planning Committee which, she advised, needed to be borne in mind when determinations were being made.

- (i) LA05/2024/0638/F – Proposed replacement of 15 metre high monopole with 22 metre high lattice tower, three existing antennas to be removed and replaced, existing 300mm transmission dish to be relocated to new tower, proposed 300mm transmission dish to be fixed to headframe, proposed installation of an equipment cabinet and all other ancillary apparatus thereto on lands to the side of 7 Begny Hill Road, Dromara

The Principal Planning Officer (PS) presented the above application as outlined within the circulated report.

The Committee received:

- Mr D Ward via a remote location in order to speak in opposition of the application; and
- Alderman A McIntyre, in order to speak in opposition of the application.

A number of Members' queries were addressed by the speakers.

A number of Members' questions were responded to by Planning Officers.

Following questions to Officers, it was proposed by the Vice Chair, Councillor G Thompson, and seconded by Councillor D J Craig that the application be deferred, to allow for further information be obtained from the applicant in relation to the reasoning for the relocation of the new lattice tower. A vote on the proposal was taken and the result was tied with 3 voting in favour and 3 against. The Chair cast the deciding vote against the proposal and it fell.

Debate

During debate:

- Councillor P Catney advised that he felt it was very finely balanced, taking onboard the views of local residents of Woodford Green while also considering the need for improving mobile telecommunications provisions in the area as a whole. Councillor Catney referred to paragraph 25 in the Officers original report which quoted paragraph 6.243 of the Strategic Planning Policy Statement which states:

Modern telecommunications are an essential and beneficial element of everyday living for the people of and visitors to this region. It is important to continue to support investment in high quality communications infrastructure which plays a vital role in our social and economic well-being. The importance of other strategic infrastructure to the region such as transport (including air and sea ports), energy and water is also recognised by government.

- (i) LA05/2024/0638/F – Proposed replacement of 15 metre high monopole with 22 metre high lattice tower, three existing antennas to be removed and replaced, existing 300mm transmission dish to be relocated to new tower, proposed 300mm transmission dish to be fixed to headframe, proposed installation of an equipment cabinet and all other ancillary apparatus thereto on lands to the side of 7 Begny Hill Road, Dromara (Cont'd)

Councillor Catney then referred to condition 2 on the Officers original report which would require the applicant to remove the existing mast within four weeks of the new mast being erected. Given this information Councillor Catney advised he would be content to accept the recommendation of the Officers;

- Councillor D J Craig agreed with Councillor Catney in that the decision was finely balanced, particularly in regard to the visual impact the new mast would have on the surrounding area. Councillor Craig advised that information given in relation to the necessity of the new mast being taller was satisfactory. Councillor Craig concluded that he felt that it was an improvement for the Dromara community as a whole, and with the information provided would be in favour of the Officers recommendation;
- Councillor N Trimble spoke of other sites that had been assessed and deemed unsuitable due to the negative visual impact the mast would have on them. Councillor Trimble advised that he felt the construction of the new mast would be unacceptable to the residents of Woodford Green and that if he was in their position, he would deem it unacceptable. Councillor Trimble advised that under permitted development rights, the applicant could extend the existing mast by 10%, and that the new mast was almost 50% larger than the existing mast so a considerable increase in size. Councillor Trimble concluded that the context of the site had changed since the erection of the initial mast as more housing had been built beside it, therefore meaning the site was no longer on the edge of development of the village, and it would have a negative visual impact on the neighbouring properties. For this reason Councillor Trimble advised he believed the application did not comply with policy TEL1 and that he was in disagreement with the Officers recommendation; and
- The Vice Chair, Councillor G Thompson, agreed with previous Members comments that the application was finely balanced. The Vice Chair continued that following her attendance at the site visit, and given the increased height and size of the proposed structure, she felt the application did not comply with policy TEL1 as it did result in unacceptable damage to visual amenity of the local area.

Vote

On a vote being taken, it was agreed to adopt the recommendation of the Planning Officer to approve this application, the vote being:

In favour: Councillor S Burns, Councillor P Catney, Councillor D J Craig, and the Chair, Alderman J Tinsley (4)

Against: The Vice Chair, Councillor G Thomspson and Councillor N Trimble (2)

- (ii) LA05/2024/0835/F – Retention of car storage yard on lands to the rear of 12-16 Beechfield Manor, Aghalee

The Principal Planning Officer (PS) presented the above application as outlined within the circulated report.

The committee received Mr N Mitchell via a remote location, to speak in opposition of the application and a number of Members' queries were addressed.

A number of Members' queries were responded to by Planning Officers and the Environmental Health Officer.

Debate

During debate:

- Councillor P Catney advised that he was in favour of a condition being imposed on the application to restrict the use of the site to storage of vehicles only. Councillor Catney continued that he was not in favour of retrospective planning applications as a whole, however, he felt the application complied with the relevant policies; and
- Councillor N Trimble referred to the condition on the use of the site for vehicle storage and advised he would be happy to second this proposal. Councillor Trimble continued that he felt he did not have enough evidence to vote in favour of the Officers recommendation, and that he felt the increased number of vehicles using the access to and from the lane to the Lurgan Road had not been properly assessed by Department for Infrastructure (DfI) Roads and as a result may not be compliant with policy TRA2.
- Councillor Trimble proposed to defer the application, in order to allow for evidence relating to increased traffic entering and exiting the site from the Lurgan Road, Aghalee be submitted by the objectors to the application and assessed by DfI Roads and Planning Officers.

The proposal by Councillor N Trimble, was seconded by Councillor D J Craig, was put to the committee and the proposal to defer the application for to seek further advice from DfI Roads stood, the result of the vote being 4 in favour and 2 against.

Adjournment of Meeting

Following this application, Councillor P Catney left the Council Chamber at 4.22 pm. The meeting was paused during this time to ensure the meeting was quorate throughout.

Resumption of Meeting

Councillor P Catney returned to the Council Chamber and the meeting resumed (4.25pm).

4. Any Other Business

4.1 Rescheduling of March Meeting of Planning Committee
Head of Planning and Capital Development

The Head of Planning and Capital Development advised Members of the need to reschedule the March meeting of the Planning Committee to Monday 9 March, 2026, to give Officers more time to assess the applications due to be heard at the meeting. It was proposed by Councillor D J Craig, seconded by Councillor N Trimble and agreed that the date be moved from Monday 2 March, 2026 to Monday 9 March, 2026.

Conclusion of the Meeting

At the conclusion of the meeting, the Chair, Alderman J Tinsley, thanked those present for their attendance. There being no further business, the meeting was terminated at 4.27 pm.

Chair/Mayor