

LISBURN & CASTLEREAGH CITY COUNCIL

Minutes of Planning Committee Meeting held in the Council Chamber and in Remote Locations on Monday, 1 December, 2025 at 10.02 am

PRESENT IN CHAMBER:

Alderman J Tinsley (Chair)

Aldermen O Gawith and M Gregg

Councillors S Burns, P Catney, D J Craig, J Laverty BEM, A Martin and N Trimble

PRESENT IN REMOTE LOCATION:

Councillor D Bassett

IN ATTENDANCE:

Director of Regeneration and Growth
Head of Planning & Capital Development
Principal Planning Officer (PS)
Senior Planning Officers (MB, PMcF and GM)
Member Services Officers (CR, EW and FA)

Cleaver Fulton Rankin

Mr B Martyn, Legal Advisor
Ms C McPeake (remote attendance)
Mr P Lockhart (remote attendance)

Before commencing the business on the agenda, the Chair, Alderman J Tinsley, advised that correspondence had been received late the previous night in respect of the first application on the schedule, LA05/2023/0344/F. The Head of Planning & Capital Development pointed out that the late representation had not been uploaded to the Planning Portal, nor had the applicant had sight of it. In consultation with the Chair, it was agreed that the meeting be adjourned for approximately 30 minutes to allow the representation to be circulated to Members for consideration, to allow the applicant to have sight of the objection and to afford Officers time to consider its contents and offer advice. This application would then be moved to the end of today's schedule.

Adjournment of Meeting

The meeting was adjourned at 10.05 am.

Resumption of Meeting

The meeting was resumed at 10.44 am.

Councillor D J Craig arrived to the meeting during the adjournment.

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 the Vice-Chair, Councillor G Thompson.

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3. Minutes of Meeting of Planning Committee held on 3 November, 2025

It was proposed by Councillor J Laverty, seconded by Alderman M Gregg and agreed that the minutes of the meeting of Committee held on 3 November, 2025 be confirmed and signed.

4. Report from the Head of Planning & Capital Development4.1 Schedule of Applications

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

4.1.1 Applications to be Determined

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

- (i) LA05/2023/0377/F – Proposed social housing scheme comprising 20 apartments (mix of 18 2 bed and 2 1 bed wheelchair) with communal amenity space, bin and cycle storage, landscaping, carparking, new site access and all associated site and access works on lands adjacent to 3-19 Moira Road, Lisburn

The Senior Planning Officer (PMcF) presented the above application as outlined within the circulated report.

Messrs D Broderick and E Neeson were in attendance remotely and they addressed a number of Members' queries.

(i) LA05/2023/0377/F – Proposed social housing scheme comprising 20 apartments (mix of 18 2 bed and 2 1 bed wheelchair) with communal amenity space, bin and cycle storage, landscaping, carparking, new site access and all associated site and access works on lands adjacent to 3-19 Moira Road, Lisburn (Contd)

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

Debate

At the discretion of the Chair, Alderman J Tinsley, a number of Members' questions were permitted to be answered during the debate stage. In response to queries raised, the Head of Planning & Capital Development confirmed, that should the planning application be approved, conditions 6 and 7 dealing with impact of noise, could have additional wording inserted to require that a report be submitted to verify that necessary mitigation works had been carried out.

During debate:

- the Chair, Alderman J Tinsley, welcomed this application which would greatly improve the site at Moira Road. The provision of wheelchair access to the development, as well as its proximity to public transport, was also welcomed;
- Alderman O Gawith welcomed this application. He was glad to see the development set back off the road and more in line with the adjacent commercial properties, which meant no overbearing onto the road. He stated that he was disappointed that the level of energy efficiency would only be as per requirements, rather than the opportunity taken to provide anything more innovative and more efficient;
- Councillor D Bassett welcomed this application, particularly the inclusion of 2 wheelchair accessible ground floor apartments;
- Councillor D J Craig stated that, with the assurances provided by Officers, he was content that approval be granted to this application. He looked forward to seeing how the Housing Association would control tenants within the facility and ensure they adhered to the terms and conditions they signed up to; however, that was outside of the Council's control;
- Councillor P Catney welcomed this application, which together with the recently developed Eurospar, would improve the area. He referred to the provision of bike racks at the proposed development but stated that there was no bike lane on the busy Moira Road. He stated that the Council could do more to enhance sustainable travel; and
- Alderman M Gregg stated that social housing was much welcomed and much needed in the area. He welcomed the additional wording that was identified for conditions 6 and 7, but was surprised it was needed. He welcomed the fact that the application met policy RE2 and that the fabric first approach was being taken, although if the facility could be developed to higher standards that would be welcomed. He had had concerns regarding the number of parking spaces, but those had been addressed during discussion. Alderman Gregg was in support of the recommendation of the Planning Officer to grant planning permission.

(i) LA05/2023/0377/F – Proposed social housing scheme comprising 20 apartments (mix of 18 2 bed and 2 1 bed wheelchair) with communal amenity space, bin and cycle storage, landscaping, carparking, new site access and all associated site and access works on lands adjacent to 3-19 Moira Road, Lisburn (Contd)

Vote

Having considered the information provided within the report of the Planning Officer, the Committee agreed unanimously to adopt the recommendation to approve this application, it being noted that additional wording would be included in conditions 6 and 7, as discussed.

Adjournment of Meeting

The Chair, Alderman J Tinsley, declared the meeting adjourned at this point for a comfort break (11.39 am).

Resumption of Meeting

The meeting was resumed at 11.49 am.

(ii) LA05/2024/0799/F – Farm building for livestock and farm machinery located 90 metres southwest of 135 Pond Park Road, Lisburn

The Senior Planning Officer (PMcF) presented the above application as outlined within the circulated report.

The Committee received Mr A McCready, accompanied by Mr R Belshaw, to speak in support of the application and a number of Members' queries were addressed.

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

Debate

During debate:

- Alderman O Gawith stated that, unfortunately, the Committee had been drip-fed information in respect of this application. It was not convincing to him, especially given that there was a small building there that could have been brought up to standard to store the small amount of hay that would be generated from a two-acre holding. Alderman Gawith was in support of the recommendation of the Planning Officer to refuse planning permission; and
- the Chair, Alderman J Tinsley, stated that he believed it was sometimes harder for a small farmer to produce as much as they could. He understood that storing hay until it was dry would command a better price when it was sold and he also appreciated that the applicant would be taking on more land at a later stage. He agreed with the point made by Alderman Gawith that

(ii) LA05/2024/0799/F – Farm building for livestock and farm machinery located 90 metres southwest of 135 Pond Park Road, Lisburn (Contd)

information had been drip-fed. However, he considered this was a genuine case and all the pieces did add up. Alderman Tinsley was satisfied in respect of integration with the surrounding land and the condition of the field and was not in support of the recommendation of the Planning Officer to refuse planning permission.

On a vote being taken, it was agreed to adopt the recommendation of the Planning Officer to refuse planning permission, the voting being:

In favour: Councillor D Bassett, Councillor S Burns, Councillor P Catney, Councillor D J Craig, Alderman O Gawith, Alderman M Gregg, Councillor J Laverty, Councillor A Martin and Councillor N Trimble (9)

Against: Alderman J Tinsley (1)

It was agreed that, prior to adjourning the meeting for lunch, items 4.2 – 4.7 on the agenda would be considered.

Councillor P Catney left the meeting at 12.44 pm.

4.2 Statutory Performance Indicators – October 2025

During this item of business, Councillor P Catney returned to the meeting (12.46 pm), Councillor A Martin left the meeting (12.47 pm) and Alderman O Gawith left, and returned to, the meeting (12.46 pm and 12.49 pm).

It was agreed that information relating to Statutory Performance Indicators for October 2025 be noted. The Chair, Alderman J Tinsley, welcomed the improvement in performance outlined in the report and commended Officers for that.

4.3 Appeal Decision – LA05/2023/0863/A

It was agreed that the report and decision of the Planning Appeals Commission in respect of the above appeal be noted.

4.4 Notification by Telecommunication Operator(s) of Intention to Utilise Permitted Development Rights

It was agreed that information regarding notification by telecommunication operators of intention to utilise Permitted Development Rights at locations in the Council area be noted.

4.5 Pre-Application Notice (PAN) for the refurbishment of existing Household Recycling Centre and Council Operations Depot. Upgrade of existing site entrance and construction of improved internal traffic flows with a new split level recycling centre, vehicle parking, shed and new staff office and welfare building at Carryduff Household Recycling Centre, Comber Road, Carryduff

It was proposed by Councillor P Catney, seconded by Councillor D J Craig and agreed that information on the pre-application notice be noted and that it be submitted in accordance with the relevant sections of the legislation and related guidance.

4.6 Consultation from DfI Planning on the Review of Planning Fees

Members were provided with a copy of a draft response to the above consultation and noted that a separate report seeking approval of the response would be presented to the Regeneration and Growth Committee.

4.7 Proposed Change of Dates to Planning Committee Meetings

The Head of Planning & Capital Development reported that, due to Christmas/New Year holidays, Easter holidays and May Day, Planning Committee meetings in January, April and May were required to be rescheduled. It was proposed by Councillor S Burns, seconded by Alderman M Gregg and agreed that meetings take place as follows:

- January – Monday 12th
- April – Monday 13th
- May – Monday 11th

Adjournment of Meeting

The Chair, Alderman J Tinsley, declared the meeting adjourned for lunch at this point (12.55 pm).

Resumption of Meeting

The meeting was resumed at 1.33 pm.

Councillor A Martin had returned during the lunch break.

(iii) LA05/2022/0831/F – Proposed retention of recently constructed agricultural building on land adjacent to 112 Back Road, Drumbo

The Senior Planning Officer (PMcF) presented the above application as outlined within the circulated report.

The Committee received Mr N Reid and Councillor U Mackin to speak in support of the application.

(iii) LA05/2022/0831/F – Proposed retention of recently constructed agricultural building on land adjacent to 112 Back Road, Drumbo (Contd)

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

Debate

During debate:

- Alderman M Gregg stated that perhaps there was a gap in policy to allow the establishment of new farms or hobby farms. He found it bizarre that, should the applicant in this case build a garage or a small permanent structure made of brick and tile under permitted development, that would be a further building and the agricultural shed applied for would be allowed under policy as it would be considered a cluster. He stated that, between the Committee making a decision and the decision being issued, there could well be another building established beside the applicant's house, which would then be considered a cluster. Alderman Gregg stated that, of all the refusal reasons listed, COU15 (b) and COU16 (b), relating to clustering, were the only two he struggled to have met by this application. He agreed with Officers that the exception in this case would struggle to make that apply. In deeming this an exception, a precedent would be set. Despite his view that this application should be approved, Alderman Gregg could not consider the proposal to form part of a cluster and, unfortunately, had to support the recommendation of the Planning Officer to approve planning permission;
- Councillor N Trimble, on behalf of everyone, apologised to the applicant for how long this application had taken to consider and the number of times it had been heard. He appreciated that, every step of the way, there had been valid reasons for deferment but there had not been a good outcome of process. He stated that, in general terms, this was a sound application as this was the type of structure that an agricultural development should be, was in the best location possible and was meeting a verifiable agricultural need. Although the dwelling had been replaced a number of years ago, it was still a farmhouse dwelling and there had been a farm business at this location for years. The difficulty was that, had even only one of the pre-existing agricultural sheds that had been cleared to make way for the new dwelling been retained, then policy would absolutely be met. It was a huge weakness of policy that it referred to a group of buildings. Whilst that may be appropriate for 99% of cases where there was a group of buildings or structures on a farm, this case had demonstrated that there was a viable route for how there could not be additional structures on a viable farm. The Committee was not in a position to change policy or to reinterpret it, rather it could only strictly apply it. Councillor Trimble stated that, if the application was not approved today, he had no doubt it could very easily come back without any change to the application, but the lay of the land could have changed in that a structure could be built through permitted development that did not require full planning permission and, if there was one additional building on the site, the application would meet policy. He could not argue with the fact that there was not an existing group of buildings on the farm;

(iii) LA05/2022/0831/F – Proposed retention of recently constructed agricultural building on land adjacent to 112 Back Road, Drumbo (Contd)

- Councillor P Catney referred to reference having been made previously to a small chicken shed at the site. However, he stated that, whilst he had sympathy for the applicant, he was in support of the recommendation of the Planning Officer to refuse planning permission;
- Councillor D J Craig stated that policy had let this application down. This was a very bureaucratic system and this was one occasion where the Committee found itself in disagreement with policy. There was no cluster at this site. Although mention had been made to a chicken shed at the site, he had not witnessed that at the site visit.

At this stage, Councillor D J Craig sought clarification from Officers regarding the presence of a chicken shed. Although at debate stage, the Chair, Alderman J Tinsley, permitted Officers to respond. The Head of Planning & Capital Development stated that Officers had not observed a chicken shed when on site, but acknowledged that that was in excess of 12 months ago. This was the first time this had been drawn to Officers' attention.

Alderman Tinsley also permitted Mr Reid to provide a description of the chicken shed which, he stated, had been in place since 2020.

Following discussion, it was proposed by Councillor D J Craig and seconded by Alderman O Gawith that this application be deferred to allow Officers to visit the site and verify information that had come to light in respect of the presence of a chicken shed in order that the Committee could come to a conclusion on this application having considered the full information. On a vote being taken this proposal was agreed, the voting being 9 in favour and 1 against. The Chair, Alderman J Tinsley asked that Mr Reid provide as much information as possible regarding the history of the chicken shed.

Given that the applicant was a teacher, Councillor N Trimble asked that consideration be given to the application being heard at a time outside of term-time. The Chair, Alderman J Tinsley, agreed that this could possibly be accommodated by scheduling the application to be heard at the end of a future meeting.

Adjournment of Meeting

The Chair, Alderman J Tinsley, declared the meeting adjourned at this point for a comfort break (2.28 pm).

Resumption of Meeting

The meeting was resumed at 2.32 pm.

(iv) LA05/2023/0344/F – Erection of discount food store (with solar panels on roof), provision of accesses, car parking, landscaping and associated site works on land 140 metres north of Unit 5 (Sainsbury's), Sprucefield Park, Lisburn

The Senior Planning Officer (GM) presented the above application as outlined within the circulated report. She went on to address the content of the late representation submitted the previous evening.

The Committee received Mr C Fegan, accompanied by Mr D Monaghan and Mrs E Greenlees) to speak in favour of the application and a number of Members's queries were addressed.

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

Debate

During debate:

- Councillor P Catney stated that, in light of what had been passed at Stormont that no new liquor licences would be issued, it was necessary to look at the hospitality sector and how it was affected in city centres. This would be a surrender of a licence that would go out to a supermarket close to Sainsbury's, which already had licence. Therefore, there were more factors coming into play than the out-of-town shopping centre. As for where the proposed development was situated, Councillor Catney believed the applicant could have given more consideration to sustainable transport. Councillor Catney was not against the application, but stated that some decisions made had consequences for the nighttime economy and city centres;
- Councillor N Trimble welcomed the application. He believed the Committee should be in favour of more development, not less, when it came to expanding the retail core in the vicinity. This development would bring employment and economic opportunity to the area. He stated that he was encouraged by the pedestrian construction. Being able to get access to the greenway from all areas of the site was welcomed and would be a good improvement. Councillor Trimble was in support of the recommendation of the Planning Officer to approve planning permission;
- the Chair, Alderman J Tinsley, was also in support of the recommendation of the Planning Officer to approve planning permission. A development such as this would bring more jobs. He was comforted by the fact that the plan was to retain the two existing Lidl stores in Lisburn. Alderman Tinsley commended Officers for taking the time to deliberate on the content of the late representation; and
- Councillor D J Craig stated that this development was an excellent opportunity for the city as a whole. He remembered in 2005 having meetings with regard to another retailer coming to that site. He now welcomed the fact that a lower cost retailer would be operating at Sprucefield which would add to the spread of facilities at the Sprucefield site and cater for all levels of shoppers. Councillor Craig referred to the vote of confidence for the Sprucefield site by well-known manufacturer, Tesla, having installed of a number of electric vehicle charging points, making Sprucefield one of the key charging sites for electric vehicles in Northern Ireland.

(iv) LA05/2023/0344/F – Erection of discount food store (with solar panels on roof), provision of accesses, car parking, landscaping and associated site works on land 140 metres north of Unit 5 (Sainsbury's), Sprucefield Park, Lisburn (Contd)

Vote

Having considered the information provided within the report of the Planning Officer, the Committee agreed unanimously to adopt the recommendation to approve this application.

5. Any Other Business

5.1 Member Services Officer – Early Retirement
Chair, Alderman J Tinsley

The Chair, Alderman J Tinsley, advised that this was the last Planning Committee meeting at which Member Services Officer, Mrs C Roe, would be in attendance before her forthcoming early retirement. He paid tribute to her work with the Council and particularly the Planning Committee.

Conclusion of the Meeting

At the conclusion of the meeting, the Chair, Alderman J Tinsley, thanked those present for their attendance and wished them all a Happy Christmas.

There being no further business, the meeting was terminated at 3.19 pm.

Chair/Mayor