



January 28th, 2026

Chairman : Alderman J Tinsley

Vice Chairman : Councillor G Thompson

Aldermen : O Gawith and M Gregg

Councillors : D Bassett, S Burns, P Catney, D J Craig, J Lavery BEM, A Martin and N Trimble

### **Notice of Meeting**

A meeting of the Planning Committee will be held on **Monday, 2nd February 2026** at **10:00 am**, in the **Council Chamber and Remote Locations** for the transaction of business on the undernoted Agenda.

**David Burns**  
**Chief Executive**

# Agenda

## 1.0 Apologies

## 2.0 Declaration of Interests

(i) Conflict of Interest on any matter before the meeting (Members to confirm the specific item)

(ii) Pecuniary and non-pecuniary interest (Member to complete the Disclosure of Interest form)

📎 *Disclosure of Interests form Sept 24.pdf*

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## 3.0 Minutes of the Planning Committee Meeting held on 12 January 2026

*For Approval*

📎 *PC 12.01.2026 - Draft Minutes for Adoption.pdf*

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## 4.0 Report from the Head of Planning and Capital Development

### 4.1 Schedule of Applications to be Determined:

*For Decision*

📎 *Item 1 - Schedule of Applications.pdf*

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- (i) LA05/2023/0316/F – Erection of 23 dwellings (amended layout and house types previously approved under reference Y/2009/0303/RM), landscaping and all other associated site works on lands to the west of nos.16-22, 30 and 32 Millmount Village Crescent and lands 40m to the south nos.11-22 Millmount Village Way

📎 *Appendix 1.1a Addendum Millmount (2.2.26).pdf*

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📎 *Appendix 1.1b LA05.2023.0316.F - Millmount Final (12.1.26).pdf*

Page 17

- (ii) LA05/2024/0768/F - Erection of 16 dwellings (social/affordable) and associated/ancillary development to include new accesses, roadways, landscaping and other siteworks on lands adjacent to 9 Bridge Cottages, Moybrick Road, Dromara

📎 *Appendix 1.2 LA05.2024.0768.F 9 Bridge cottages Moybrick Road.pdf*

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- (iii) LA05/2023/0170/F – Proposed infill dwelling and garage at 92 Glenavy Road, Lisburn

📎 *Appendix 1.3a 92 Glenavy Road (2.2.26).pdf*

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📎 *Appendix 1.3b Final Report of Site Visit LA05-2023-0170-F (22.01.2026).pdf*

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- (iv) LA05/2023/0494/F – Conversion of and single storey extension to disused mill to a dwelling with associated site works on lands approximately 33 metres southwest of 18 Gransha Close, Comber

Appendix 1.4a Addendum LA05.2023.0494.F Gransha Close (2.2.26).pdf Page 127

Appendix 1.4b Report of Site Visit LA05-2023-0494-F - 20.10.2025 (002).pdf Page 150

Appendix 1.4c LA05.2023.0494 DM Officers report Final (6.10.25).pdf Page 152

- (v) LA05/2024/0638/F – Proposed replacement of 15metre high monopole with 22metre high lattice tower, 3 existing antennas to be removed and replaced, existing 1 300mm transmission dish to be relocated to new tower, proposed 1 300mm transmission dish to be fixed to headframe, proposed installation of 1 equipment cabinet and all other ancillary apparatus thereto on lands to the side of 7 Begny Hill, Dromara

Appendix 1.5 LA05.2024.0638.F Lands 7 Begny Hill.pdf Page 187

- (vi) LA05/2025/0539/F – Retention of existing container for hairdressers at Sideburns Barber Lounge, Carryduff Business Park, Comber Road, Carryduff

Appendix 1.6 LA05.2025.0539.F Sideburns Barber Lounge (23.7.25).pdf Page 202

#### 4.2 Statutory Performance Indicators - December 2025

*For Noting*

Item 2 - Statutory Performance Indicators - December 2025.pdf Page 216

Appendix 2 Lisburn\_Castlereagh\_December\_Monthly\_MI.pdf Page 218

#### 4.3 Quarter 2 Statistical Bulletin – July to September 2025/26

*For Noting*

Item 3 - Quarter 2 Statistical Bulletin - July-September 2025.pdf Page 219

#### 4.4 Appeal Decision – LA05/2020/0991/O

*For Noting*

Item 4 - Appeal Decision -LA05 2020 0991o.pdf Page 222


Appendix 4 Appeal decision LA05 2020 0991o.pdf Page 224

#### 4.5 Pre-application Notice (PAN) for proposed development of additional sport, leisure and tourism facilities at the Let's Go Hydro resort

### *For Decision*

comprising a centre of excellence for padel tennis (with ancillary lounge and bar), new gym and wellbeing facility, replacement of existing marquee padel tennis building with purpose built steel frame padel tennis building, golf driving range and indoor golf simulator facilities, together with internal signage, relocation of existing glamping pods/safari lodges/house boat and associated access, parking, fencing, netting, floodlighting, landscaping and site works at Lets Go Hydro 1 Mealough Road, Belfast.

 **Item 5- LA05 2025 0907PAN.pdf** **Page 231**


 **Appendix 5a - Report in relation to LA05 2025 0907PAN.pdf** **Page 233**


 **Appendix 5b LA05 2025 0907PAN application form.pdf** **Page 236**

 **Appendix 5c LA05 2025 0907PAN Site Location Plan.pdf** **Page 242**

#### **4.6 Notification by telecommunication operator(s) of intention to utilise permitted development rights**

##### *For Noting*

 **Item 6 - Notifications from an Operator in respect of intention.pdf** **Page 243**

 **Appendix 6 List of Notifications - February 2026.pdf** **Page 245**

#### **4.7 NILGA Planning Learning and Engagement Programme – Request for Nominations**

##### *For Decision*

 **Item 7 Letter to Planning Chairs re Planning Learning and Engagement.pdf** **Page 246**

 **Appendix 7 Letter to Planning Chairs re Planning Learning and Engagement 140126.pdf** **Page 248**

## **5.0 Any Other Business**

## LISBURN & CASTLEREAGH CITY COUNCIL

### MEMBERS DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

#### 1. Pecuniary Interests

The Northern Ireland Local Government Code of Conduct for Councillors under Section 6 requires you to declare at the relevant meeting any pecuniary interest that you may have in any matter coming before any meeting of your Council.

Pecuniary (or financial) interests are those where the decision to be taken could financially benefit or financially disadvantage either you or a member of your close family. A member of your close family is defined as at least your spouse, live-in partner, parent, child, brother, sister and the spouses of any of these. Members may wish to be more prudent by extending that list to include grandparents, uncles, aunts, nephews, nieces or even close friends.

This information will be recorded in a Statutory Register. On such matters **you must not speak or vote**. Subject to the provisions of Sections 6.5 to 6.11 of the Code, if such a matter is to be discussed by your Council, **you must withdraw from the meeting whilst that matter is being discussed**.

#### 2. Private or Personal Non-Pecuniary Interests

In addition you must also declare any significant private or personal non-pecuniary interest in a matter arising at a Council meeting (please see also Sections 5.2 and 5.6 and 5.8 of the Code).

Significant private or personal non-pecuniary (membership) interests are those which do not financially benefit or financially disadvantage you or a member of your close family directly, but nonetheless, so significant that could be considered as being likely to influence your decision.

Subject to the provisions of Sections 6.5 to 6.11 of the Code, you must declare this interest as soon as it becomes apparent and **you must withdraw from any Council meeting (including committee or sub-committee meetings) when this matter is being discussed**.

In respect of each of these, please complete the form below as necessary.

#### Pecuniary Interests

Meeting (Council or Committee - please specify and name):

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Date of Meeting: \_\_\_\_\_

Item(s) in which you must declare an interest (please specify item number from report):

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Nature of Pecuniary Interest:

**Private or Personal Non-Pecuniary Interests**

Meeting (Council or Committee - please specify and name):

Date of Meeting:

Item(s) in which you must declare an interest (please specify item number from report):

Nature of Private or Personal Non-Pecuniary Interest:

Name:

Address:

Signed:

Date:

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*If you have any queries please contact David Burns, Chief Executive,  
Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council*

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# **LISBURN & CASTLEREAGH CITY COUNCIL**

## **Minutes of Planning Committee Meeting held in the Council Chamber and in Remote Locations on Monday, 12 January, 2026 at 10.00 am**

### **PRESENT IN CHAMBER:**

Alderman J Tinsley (Chair)  
Councillor G Thompson (Vice Chair)  
Aldermen O Gawith and M Gregg  
Councillors P Catney, D J Craig, A Martin and N Trimble

### **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 (FA and EW)

#### Cleaver Fulton Rankin

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

### 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 Councillors D Bassett, S Burns and J Lavery.

#### 2. Declarations of Interest

Councillor A Martin declared a non-pecuniary interest in applications LA05/2023/0281/F and LA05/2023/0368/O as he had discussions with local residents regarding the applications. He would withdraw from the Council Chamber during consideration of these applications.

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### 3. Minutes of Meeting of Planning Committee held on 1 December, 2025

It was agreed that the minutes of the meeting of Committee held on 1 December, 2025 be confirmed and signed.

### 4. Report from the Head of Planning & Capital Development

#### 4.1 Schedule of Applications

The Chair, Alderman J Tinsley, advised that there were 2 major and 4 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) LA05/2023/0281/F – Public Realm improvement works which include enhanced civic spaces at The Square and Lower Main Street. Also upgrade of streetscape to include new high-quality surfacing, rationalisation of parking with defined parking/loading bays introduced; upgraded street furniture and new cycle stands, lighting and street tree planting on lands within Royal Hillsborough at Lisburn Street, Ballynahinch Street extending through Main Street, the Square to Dromore Road, Park Street and Park Lane

Having declared an interest in this application, Councillor A Martin left the meeting (10.07 am).

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

The Committee received Mr D McKinstry to speak in support of the application. Mr McKinstry was joined by Mr A McGuigan and Mr D Fletcher. Together they responded to a number of Members queries.

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

#### Debate

During debate:

- The Chair, Alderman J Tinsley, thanked Officers for their work on the application and spoke of how it would greatly transform Royal Hillsborough. The Chair continued that the investment would attract even more visitors to the village which would benefit the Council. The Chair commended Officers and offered his full support to the application;

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- (i) LA05/2023/0281/F – Public Realm improvement works which include enhanced civic spaces at The Square and Lower Main Street. Also upgrade of streetscape to include new high-quality surfacing, rationalisation of parking with defined parking/loading bays introduced; upgraded street furniture and new cycle stands, lighting and street tree planting on lands within Royal Hillsborough at Lisburn Street, Ballynahinch Street extending through Main Street, the Square to Dromore Road, Park Street and Park Lane (Cont'd)
- Councillor D J Craig concurred with the Chair. Councillor Craig recalled accidents in which children had been knocked down by vehicles and welcomed the inclusion of two pedestrian crossings and, spoke of how the investment will enhance the historic value of the village;
  - Councillor P Catney agreed with the comments made by the Chair, however advised that he felt an opportunity had been missed to improve sustainable travel with the omission of cycle lanes from the application. Councillor Catney continued that he was in favour of the application as a whole and that he believed the investment would enhance the village and drive forward the tourism potential for the area;
  - The Vice Chair, Councillor G Thompson echoed the previous comments made and was delighted to see that accessibility had been taken into consideration with a number of features included to assist those with disabilities. The Vice Chair also welcomed the inclusion of the pedestrian crossings and praised Officers for the consideration of age friendly requirements when assessing the application; and
  - Alderman O Gawith stated that he felt it would be incomprehensible not to welcome the application and that it would be an excellent improvement for the area.

#### 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.

Councillor A Martin returned to the meeting (11.00 am).

#### Adjournment of Meeting

The Chair, Alderman J Tinsley, declared the meeting adjourned at this point for a comfort break (11.02 am).

#### Resumption of Meeting

The meeting was resumed at 11.08 am.

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- (ii) LA05/2023/0316/F – Erection of 23 dwellings (amended layout and house types previously approved under reference Y/2009/0303/RM), landscaping and all other associated site works on lands to the west of nos.16-22, 30 and 32 Millmount Village Crescent and lands 40m to the south nos.11-22 Millmount Village Way

Councillor N Trimble arrived at the meeting during the consideration of this application (11.26 am).

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

The Committee received Mr N Salt to speak in support of the application and a number of Members' queries were addressed.

Planning Officers responded to questions from Members'.

During the questions to Planning Officers, Alderman M Gregg had raised concerns with the delay of the installation of traffic lights at the junction of Old Mill Meadows and the Upper Newtownards Road, a condition imposed on the applicant for the wider Millmount Development. It was proposed by Alderman Gregg and seconded by Councillor D J Craig to defer the application for one month, so that Officers can:

1. obtain information from DfI Roads in relation to the safety of the junction in question; and
2. obtain road traffic accident statistics from PSNI in relation to the junction in question for the three years prior.

On a vote being taken the proposal stood, the result of the vote being 5 in favour, 1 against and 1 abstained.

- (iii) LA05/2024/0618/F – Erection of 83 dwellings and 21 apartments totalling 104 residential units (comprising an amendment to planning permission LA05/2017/1153/F) with associated car parking, detached garages, landscaping, access arrangements and site works on lands at Comber Road Dundonald (northeast of Comber Road and 75 metres southwest of 4 Millmount Village Drive)

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

The Committee received Mr N Salt to speak in support of the application and a number of Members' queries were addressed.

Planning Officers answered questions from Members. During these questions the Head of Planning and Capital Development read from the last consultation response from NI Water and acknowledged that the conditions associated with the consultation had not been included. He advised that if the Members were minded to accept the advice of officers the application would be subject to two negative conditions from NI Water stating:

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- (iii) LA05/2024/0618/F – Erection of 83 dwellings and 21 apartments totalling 104 residential units (comprising an amendment to planning permission LA05/2017/1153/F) with associated car parking, detached garages, landscaping, access arrangements and site works on lands at Comber Road Dundonald (northeast of Comber Road and 75 metres southwest of 4 Millmount Village Drive) (Cont'd)

1. That no development should commence on the site until a detailed drainage design is approved by the Council in consultation with NI Water.
2. No dwelling shall be occupied until the engineering solution for wastewater has been delivered.

Debate

During debate:

- The Chair, Alderman J Tinsley, welcomed the relocation of the play park closer to the Comber Greenway and thanked officers for providing clarity on the location of the homes designated for affordable housing;
- Alderman M Gregg advised that he was unable to support the application due to the location of the apartment blocks as they are not in keeping with the area. Alderman Gregg continued that while he appreciated the conditions put forward by NI Water, in his opinion there was a history of the developer not fulfilling conditions, such as the overdue delivery of a play park and, that Planning Enforcement should be stronger when ensuring conditions are met; and
- Alderman O Gawith stated that in the past mistakes had been made regarding apartment blocks being poorly situated and that in his view this could happen again. As a result of this Alderman Gawith felt he was unable to support the application.

Vote

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

In favour: Councillor P Catney, Councillor D J Craig, Councillor A Martin, Vice Chair, Councillor G Thompson, Councillor N Trimble and the Chair, Alderman J Tinsley (6)

Against: Alderman O Gawith and Alderman M Gregg (2)

Abstain: None (0)

Following the vote Alderman M Gregg enquired as to whether there could be a condition put on the application to deliver the overdue playpark and pedestrian access to the Comber Greenway before works commence.

The Head of Planning and Capital Development advised that as the application had been approved without amendment to the condition and that the Members

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would have to revisit the decision. The Head of Planning and Capital Development proposed as an alternative that Officers meet with the developer on the programme for delivering play and report back to the committee with the outcome.

#### "In Committee"

Following discussion, it was proposed by Alderman M Gregg, seconded by Councillor D J Craig and agreed to go 'into committee' to consider this matter. Those members of the public and press in attendance left the meeting (12.35 pm).

Members were provided with legal advice in respect of the matter raised by Alderman M Gregg.

#### Resumption of Normal Business

It was proposed by Alderman M Gregg, seconded by Councillor P Catney and agreed to come out of committee and normal business was resumed (12.55 pm).

The Chair, Alderman J Tinsley, advised those present that Officers would engage with the developer regarding the timeframe for delivery of the play park.

#### Adjournment of Meeting

The Chair, Alderman J Tinsley, declared the meeting adjourned for lunch at this point (12.57 pm).

#### Resumption of Meeting

The meeting was resumed at 1.36 pm.

Councillor D J Craig and the Director of Regeneration and Growth did not return to the meeting after the lunch break.

#### (iv) LA05/2023/0170/F – Proposed infill dwelling and garage at 92 Glenavy Road, Lisburn

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

The Committee received Mr A Stephens to speak in support of the application and a number of Members' queries were addressed.

Planning Officers responded to questions from Members.

Following discussion on the gap between properties, and whether it could be considered to comply with Policy COU8, it was proposed by Alderman O Gawith and seconded by the Chair, Alderman J Tinsley, that this application be deferred to allow for a site visit. A vote was taken on the proposal, the result being 4 in favour and 3 against, and the proposal stood.

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- (v) LA05/2023/0368/O – Dwelling and garage at Clogher Road, adjacent to and immediately northwest of 115a Saintfield Road, Lisburn

Councillor A Martin left the meeting during consideration of this application (2.10 pm).

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

The Committee received Ms S Burns Fraser to speak in favour 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:

- Councillor N Trimble advised that while he had sympathy with the applicant, he could not go against the recommendation of Officers with the evidence provided to him.

#### Vote

Having considered the information provided within the report of the Planning Officer, the Committee agreed unanimously to adopt the recommendation to refuse planning permission.

Councillor A Martin returned to the meeting (2.34 pm).

- (vi) LA05/2022/0831/F – Proposed retention of agricultural building and underground slurry tank 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 and a number of Members' queries were addressed.

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

#### Debate

During debate:

- Councillor P Catney lamented on the ambiguity of the chicken shed and advised whilst he would like to be able to grant planning permission in this instance, as a result of the aforementioned ambiguity he felt it would be impossible to go against the recommendation of the Officers;

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(vi) LA05/2022/0831/F – Proposed retention of agricultural building and underground slurry tank on land adjacent to 112 Back Road, Drumbo  
(Cont'd)

- Alderman M Gregg stated that the application had been given a fair hearing on more than one occasion and he felt Members had been left in a difficult position by policy. Alderman Gregg continued that all avenues had been explored by both Members and Officers and, with the evidence in front of him, he had no alternative but to agree with the Officers; and
- Councillor N Trimble agreed with the comments from Alderman M Gregg. Councillor Trimble continued that he could see a route for the application to comply with policy but as the application stood before him it did not and he would vote with the recommendation of the Officers.

Vote

Having considered the information provided within the report of the Planning Officer, the Committee agreed unanimously to adopt the recommendation to refuse planning permission.

Adjournment of Meeting

The Chair, Alderman J Tinsley, declared the meeting adjourned at this point for a comfort break (3.54 pm).

Resumption of Meeting

The meeting was resumed at 4.00 pm.

4.2 Statutory Performance Indicators – November 2025

It was agreed that information relating to Statutory Performance Indicators for November 2025 be noted.

4.3 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.

4.4 Avian influenza prevention zone

Members noted the contents of the report containing information from the Department for Infrastructure on an avian influenza prevention zone.

#### 4.5 Local Development Plan 2032 Quarterly Update

The Head of Planning and Capital Development advised Members that the Principal Planning Officer (PS) would be taking up a new role in the department and that Senior Planning Officer (PMcF) would be acting up to the role of Principal Planning Officer.

Alderman M Gregg enquired as to when Members would be consulted on the next iteration of the Local Development Plan. The Head of Planning and Capital Development advised that this should take place within the next six months.

It was agreed by Members to note the information contained in the update on the Local Development Plan 2032

#### 4.6 Enforcement Quarterly Update

It was agreed that information relating to the Enforcement Quarterly Update be noted.

#### 5. Any Other Business

There was no other business to discuss.

#### 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 4.12 pm.

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Chair/Mayor

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| <b>Committee:</b>   | Planning Committee                       |
| <b>Date:</b>        | 2 February 2026                          |
| <b>Report from:</b> | Head of Planning and Capital Development |

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| <b>Item for:</b> | Decision   |
| <b>Subject:</b>  | Schedule of Planning Applications to be Determined   |
| 1.0              | <p><b><u>Background</u></b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The following applications have been made to the Council as the Local Planning Authority for determination.</li> <li>In arriving at a decision (for each application) the Committee should have regard to the guiding principle in the SPPS (paragraph 3.8) that sustainable development should be permitted, having regard to the development plan and all other material considerations, unless the proposed development will cause demonstrable harm to interests of acknowledged importance.</li> <li>Members are also reminded about Part 9 of the Northern Ireland Local Government Code of Conduct and the advice contained therein in respect of the development management process with particular reference to conflicts of interest, lobbying and expressing views for or against proposals in advance of the meeting.</li> </ol> <p><b><u>Key Issues</u></b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The applications are presented in accordance with the current scheme of delegation. There are six local applications. Four have been Called In (two previously deferred) and two whereby Exceptions apply (one of these previously deferred). <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>LA05/2023/0316/F – Erection of 23 dwellings (amended layout and house types previously approved under reference Y/2009/0303/RM), landscaping and all other associated site works on lands to the west of nos.16-22, 30 and 32 Millmount Village Crescent and lands 40m to the south nos.11-22 Millmount Village Way<br/>Recommendation – Approval</li> <li>LA05/2024/0768/F - Erection of 16 dwellings (social/affordable) and associated/ancillary development to include new accesses, roadways, landscaping and other siteworks on lands adjacent to 9 Bridge Cottages, Moybrick Road, Dromara<br/>Recommendation – Approval</li> <li>LA05/2023/0170/F – Proposed infill dwelling and garage at 92 Glenavy Road, Lisburn<br/>Recommendation – Refusal</li> <li>LA05/2023/0494/F – Conversion of and single storey extension to disused mill to a dwelling with associated site works on lands approximately 33 metres southwest of 18 Gransha Close, Comber.</li> </ol> </li> </ol> |

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|     | <p>Recommendation – Approval (Change of opinion)</p> <p>e) LA05/2024/0638/F – Proposed replacement of 15metre high monopole with 22metre high lattice tower, 3 existing antennas to be removed and replaced, existing 1 300mm transmission dish to be relocated to new tower, proposed 1 300mm transmission dish to be fixed to headframe, proposed installation of 1 equipment cabinet and all other ancillary apparatus thereto on lands to the side of 7 Begny Hill, Dromara<br/>Recommendation – Approval</p> <p>f) LA05/2025/0539/F – Retention of existing container for hairdressers at Sideburns Barber Lounge, Carryduff Business Park, Comber Road, Carryduff.<br/>Recommendation – Refusal</p> <p>2. The above referenced applications will be decided having regard to paragraphs 38 to 53 of the Protocol of the Operation of the Planning Committee.</p> |    |
|     | <p><b><u>Recommendation</u></b></p> <p>For each application the Members are asked to make a decision having considered the detail of the Planning Officer’s report, listen to any third-party representations, ask questions of the officers, take legal advice (if required) and engage in a debate of the issues.</p>  |    |
| 3.0 | <p><b><u>Finance and Resource Implications</u></b></p> <p>Decisions may be subject to:</p> <p>(a) Planning Appeal (where the recommendation is to refuse)<br/>(b) Judicial Review</p> <p>Applicants have the right to appeal against a decision to refuse planning permission. Where the Council has been deemed to have acted unreasonably the applicant may apply for an award of costs against the Council. This must be made at the time of the appeal. The Protocol for the Operation of the Planning Committee provides options for how appeals should be resourced.</p> <p>In all decisions there is the right for applicants and third parties to seek leave for Judicial Review. The Council will review on an on-going basis the financial and resource implications of processing applications.</p>   |    |
| 4.0 | <p><b><u>Equality/Good Relations and Rural Needs Impact Assessments</u></b></p>  |    |
| 4.1 | Has an equality and good relations screening been carried out?   | No |
| 4.2 | <p>Brief summary of the key issues identified and proposed mitigating actions <u>or</u> rationale why the screening was not carried out.</p> <p>The policies against which each planning application is considered have been subject to a separate screening and/or assessment for each</p>  |    |

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|     | application. There is no requirement to repeat this for the advice that comes forward in each of the appended reports.   |    |
| 4.3 | Has a Rural Needs Impact Assessment (RNIA) been completed?   | No |
| 4.4 | <p>Summary of the key issues identified and proposed mitigating actions <u>or</u> rationale why the screening was not carried out.</p> <p>The policies against which each planning application is considered have been subject to a separate screening and/or assessment for each application. There is no requirement to repeat this for the advice that comes forward in each of the appended reports.</p> |    |

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| Appendices: | <div>Appendix 1.1a LA05/2023/0316/F</div> <div>Appendix 1.1b LA05/2023/0316/F (Report 12.1.26)</div> <div>Appendix 1.2 LA05/2024/0768/F</div> <div>Appendix 1.3a LA05/2023/0170/F</div> <div>Appendix 1.3b LA05/2023/0170/F (Site meeting report)</div> <div>Appendix 1.3c LA05/2023/0170/F (Report 12.1.26)</div> <div>Appendix 1.4a LA05/2023/0494/F</div> <div>Appendix 1.4b LA05/2023/0494/F (Site meeting report)</div> <div>Appendix 1.4c LA05/2023/0494/F (Report 6.10.25)</div> <div>Appendix 1.5 LA05/2024/0638/F</div> <div>Appendix 1.6 LA05/2025/0539/F</div> |
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## Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council

| Planning Committee        |   |
|---------------------------|---|
| Date of Committee Meeting | 02 February 2026  |
| Committee Interest        | Local Application (Called In) – Addendum  |
| Application Reference     | LA05/2023/0316/F  |
| Proposal Description      | Erection of 23 dwellings (amended layout and house types previously approved under reference Y/2009/0303/RM), landscaping and all other associated site works |
| Location                  | Lands to the west of 16-22, 30 and 32 Millmount Village Crescent and lands 40 metres to the south nos.11-22 Millmount Village Way                             |
| Representations           | None  |
| Case Officer              | Catherine Gray  |
| Recommendation            | <b>Approval</b>   |

### Background

1. This application was included on the Schedule of Applications for consideration by the Committee at a meeting on 12 January 2026. The recommendation was to approve planning permission.

Following the presentation by officers, Members agreed to defer consideration of the application to allow for further information, so that Officers could:

- obtain information from DfI Roads in relation to the safety of the junction in question; and
- obtain road traffic accident statistics from PSNI in relation to the junction in question for the three years prior.

### Further Consideration

2. In response to the issues raised by members DfI Roads responded to confirm as follows:

*Our last correspondence to RPS, the Applicant's Agent, was on the 22/12/25. In it we explained that DfI are content with the proposed layout and requested that they carry out a road safety audit on this basis.*

*Final acceptance of the layout will be subject to the outcome of the road safety audit. There has been no reply to date.*

*I have spoken to our Traffic Management Section and they have confirmed that:*

- *(i)there has been no recorded Road Traffic Collisions (ref PSNI data) over the last 3 years at Old Mill Meadows/Upper Newtownards Road Junction; and*
  - *(ii)that the junction is not considered a priority on DfI Traffic Management's list of junctions for improvement.*
3. The design of the signalised junction at Coopers Mill with the Upper Newtownards Road is agreed in principle, and the separate approval process is at an advanced stage of processing. DfI Roads hold no record of accident history for this junction for the past three years.
  4. The advice offered by DfI Roads does not change the substance of the main report. It would not be appropriate to attach a planning condition to this proposal linking it to the delivery of a signalised junction onto the Upper Newtownards Road.
  5. An alternative access is available onto the Comber Road from the Millmount Road and the wider delivery of the improvements to the road network for other phases of the development are being managed through a separate regulatory process.

### Conclusion and Recommendation

6. The advice previously offered that planning permission should be approved is not changed.
7. The information contained in this addendum should be read in conjunction with the main DM officer's report previously presented to Committee on 12 January 2026.

## Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council

|                           |   |
|---------------------------|---|
| Council/Committee         | Planning Committee  |
| Date of Committee Meeting | 12 January 2026   |
| Committee Interest        | Local (Exceptions Apply)  |
| Application Reference     | LA05/2023/0316/F  |
| District Electoral Area   | Castlereagh East  |
| Proposal Description      | Erection of 23 dwellings (amended layout and house types previously approved under reference Y/2009/0303/RM), landscaping and all other associated site works |
| Location                  | Lands to the west of 16-22, 30 and 32 Millmount Village Crescent and lands 40 metres to the south nos.11-22 Millmount Village Way                             |
| Representations           | None  |
| Case Officer              | Catherine Gray  |
| Recommendation            | <b>Approval</b>   |

### Summary of Recommendation

1. This is a local application. It is presented to the Committee for determination in accordance with the Scheme of Delegation in that the application requires a legal agreement to secure the delivery of affordable housing.
2. It is recommended that planning permission is granted as the proposal is in accordance with the requirements of policies HOU1, HOU3, HOU4 and HOU5 of Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council Plan Strategy in that the detailed layout and design of the proposed buildings create a quality residential environment and when the buildings are constructed, they will not adversely impact on the character of the area. The development will also not have a detrimental impact on the amenity of existing residents in properties adjoining the site by reason of overlooking or dominance.
3. Furthermore, the density is not significantly different than that found in the established residential area and the proposed pattern of development is in keeping with the overall character and environmental quality of the established residential area.
4. It is considered that the proposal is also in accordance with the requirements of policy HOU10 of the Plan Strategy in that adequate provision is made for

affordable housing as an integral part of the development. This provision will be subject to a Section 76 Planning Agreement.

5. The proposal complies with policies NH1, NH2 and NH5 of the Plan Strategy in that the development will not harm any protected species nor is it likely to result in the unacceptable adverse impact on, or damage to known habitats, species or features of Natural Heritage Importance including any European designated sites.
6. The proposal complies with policy TRA1 the Plan Strategy in that the detail demonstrates that an accessible environment will be created through the provision of footway along the front of the site.
7. The proposal complies with policy TRA2 of the Plan Strategy in that the detail submitted demonstrates that the creation of two new accesses will not prejudice road safety or significantly inconvenience the flow of traffic. Regard is also had to the nature and scale of the development, the character of the existing development, the location and number of existing accesses and the standard of the existing road network.
8. The proposal complies with the policy TRA7 of the Plan Strategy in that the detail demonstrates that adequate provision for car parking and appropriate servicing arrangements has been provided without prejudice to road safety. It will not inconvenience road users or impede the flow of traffic on the surrounding road network.
9. The proposal complies with policies HE2, HE4 and HE9 of the Plan Strategy subject to the implementation of a developer-funded programme of archaeological works to identify and record any archaeological remains in advance of new construction, or to provide for their preservation in situ. Furthermore, it is demonstrated that the proposal will not adversely affect the setting of a listed building Millmount House which is located within the site but excluded as part of this proposal.
10. The proposed development complies with policies FLD 1, 2 3 of the Plan Strategy as it is demonstrated that adequate drainage can be provided within the site to service the proposal without causing or exacerbating flooding elsewhere.
11. The proposal complies with policy RE2 as the new dwellings are to be constructed in accordance with current building control standards and DfC design standards which encourages sustainable design and energy efficiency.

## Description of Site and Surroundings

### Site Context

12. The 1.87 application site is located in Dundonald to the south of Millmount Road and northeast of the Comber Road and occupies land which is partially cleared for development and is currently used as a builder's compound for the storage of construction materials.

### Surrounding Context

The land to the north, south and east of the site is residential in character and comprised of recently constructed dwellings that are part of the Millmount Village development. To the southwest the land has been cleared for further residential development.

### **Proposed Development**

13. This is a full application for the erection of 23 dwellings (amended layout and house types previously approved under reference Y/2009/0303/RM), landscaping and all other associated site works.
14. The following documents are submitted in support of the application:
  - Design and Access Statement
  - Outline Construction Environmental Management Plan (OCEMP)
  - Northern Ireland Biodiversity Checklist and Preliminary Ecological Appraisal
  - Bat Survey
  - Drainage Assessment
  - Drainage Assessment Addendum
  - Drainage Assessment Addendum 2
  - Flood Risk Assessment
  - Landscape Management Plan
  - Tree Survey and Report

### **Relevant Planning History**

15. The relevant planning history associated with the application site is set out in the table below:

| Reference Number | Proposal   | Decision                         |
|------------------|--|----------------------------------|
| LA05/2022/1005/F | Erection of 19 dwellings (revision to layout and house types previously approved under Y/2009/0303/RM), landscaping and all other associated site works (Amended plans) at Lands approx. 44m west of 32 Millmount Village Crescent, BT16 1YT and 9m west of 9 Millmount Road, BT16 1UY | Permission Granted<br>28/11/2024 |

|                  |   |                                   |
|------------------|---|-----------------------------------|
| LA05/2018/0512/F | Erection of 49 apartments and 244 dwellings, realignment of Spine Road granted approval under Y/2009/0303/RM, access arrangements, signalisation of Newtownards Road / Old Mill Meadows and Comber Road / Millmount Road junctions car parking, landscaping and associated site works (293 residential units in total). | Permission Granted 25/03/2020     |
| Y/2009/0303/RM   | Reserved matters for a residential development of 483 dwellings comprising detached and semi-detached, townhouses and apartments including distributor road, cycle/footpaths, access, landscaping and associated site works (reduction in residential unit numbers).  | Permission Granted 05/07/2017     |
| Y/1996/0407      | Residential Development   | Permission Granted September 2002 |

## Consultations

16. The following consultations were carried out:

| Consultee                  | Response                  |
|----------------------------|---------------------------|
| DfI Roads                  | No objection in principle |
| DfI Rivers Agency          | No objection              |
| Housing Executive          | No objection              |
| LCCC Environmental Health  | No objection              |
| NI Water                   | No objection              |
| NIEA Natural Heritage      | No objection              |
| NIEA Water Management Unit | No objection              |

| Consultee  | Response     |
|--|--------------|
| DfC Historic Environment<br>Division: Historic Monuments | No objection |
| DfC Historic Environment<br>Division: Historic Buildings | No objection |

## Representations

17. No representations have been received in respect of the application.

## Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)

18. The thresholds set out in the Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2017 have been considered as part of this assessment.
19. The site area is 1.87 hectares and exceeds the thresholds set out in Section 10(b) of Schedule 2, of the Planning Environmental Impact Assessment (NI) Regulations 2017.
20. An EIA determination was carried out, and it was concluded that given the scale and nature of the proposal there is not likely to be any unacceptable adverse environmental impacts created by the proposed development and as such, an Environmental Statement was not required to inform the assessment of the application.

## Local Development Plan

21. Section 6(4) of the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 requires that in making a determination on Planning applications regard must be had to the requirements of the local development plan and that the determination of applications must be in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

### Plan Strategy 2032

22. It is stated at Part 1 of the Plan Strategy that:

*Transitional arrangements will apply in relation to the existing Plan designations. The existing Development Plans which remain in effect for different parts of the Council area are set out in Chapter 2 (Existing Development Plans). Following adoption, the Development Plan will be the Plan Strategy and any old Development Plan, with the Plan Strategy having priority in the event of a conflict. Regulation 1*

*state that the old Development Plans will cease to have effect on adoption of the new LDP at Local Policies Plan (LPP) stage.*

*The Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan (BMAP) was intended to be the Development Plan on its adoption in September 2014. This Plan was subsequently declared unlawful following a successful legal challenge and therefore remains in its entirety un-adopted.*

*BMAP in its post-inquiry form was at an advanced stage and therefore remains a material consideration. Draft BMAP (November 2004) in its pre-inquiry form also remains a material consideration in conjunction with recommendations of the Planning Appeals Commission Public Local Inquiry Reports.*

23. In accordance with the transitional arrangements the existing BUAP and the Plan Strategy are the local development plan. Draft BMAP remain material considerations.
24. The BUAP identified the application site as being located outside the settlement limit of Metropolitan Castlereagh.
25. In draft BMAP the site is located within the settlement limit of Metropolitan Castlereagh and zoned for housing under designation MCH 03/12 as a large part of the zoning has been already developed through a series of previous planning applications.
26. This proposal is for new residential development on land within a settlement. The strategic policy for Sustainable Development is set out in Part 1 of the Plan Strategy. Strategic Policy 01 – Sustainable Development states that:  
  
*The Plan will support development proposals which further sustainable development including facilitating sustainable housing growth; promoting balanced economic growth; protecting and enhancing the historic and natural environment; mitigating and adapting to climate change and supporting sustainable infrastructure.*
27. The strategic policy for Creating and Enhancing Shared Space and Quality Places is set out in Part 1 of the Plan Strategy. Strategic Policy 03 – Creating and Enhancing Shared Space and Quality Places states that:

*The Plan will support development proposals that contribute to the creation of an environment which is accessible to all and enhances opportunities for shared communities; has a high standard of connectivity and supports shared use of public realm. Good quality housing that supports more balanced communities must offer a variety of house types, sizes and tenures to meet different needs.*

*Creating shared neighbourhoods should provide opportunities for communities to access local employment, shopping, leisure, education and community facilities.*

28. The strategic policy for Good Design and Positive Place Making is set out in Part 1 of the Plan Strategy. Strategic Policy 05 – Good Design and Positive Place Making states that:

*The Plan will support development proposals that incorporate good design and positive place-making to further sustainable development, encourage healthier living, promote accessibility and inclusivity and contribute to safety. Good design should respect the character of the area, respect environmental and heritage assets and promote local distinctiveness. Positive place-making should acknowledge the need for quality, place-specific contextual design which promotes accessibility and inclusivity, creating safe, vibrant and adaptable places.*

29. The strategic policy for Protecting and Enhancing the Environment is set out in Part 1 of the Plan Strategy. Strategic Policy 06 – Protecting and Enhancing the Environment states that:

*The Plan will support development proposals that respect the historic and natural environment and biodiversity. Proposals must aim to conserve, protect and where possible enhance the environment, acknowledging the rich variety of assets and associated historic and natural heritage designations. Proposals should respect the careful management, maintenance and enhancement of ecosystem services which form an integral part of sustainable development.*

30. The strategic policy for Section 76 Agreements is set out in Part 1 of the Plan Strategy. Strategic Policy 07 – Section 76 Agreements states that:

*Development will be required to deliver more sustainable communities by providing, or making contributions to, local and regional infrastructure in proportion to its scale, impact of the development and the sustainability of its location.*

*A developer will be expected to provide or contribute to the following infrastructure in order to mitigate any negative consequences of development:*

- a) *improvements to the transport network, including walking and cycling routes, public transport or, where necessary appropriate parking provision*
- b) *affordable housing*
- c) *educational facilities and/or their upgrades*
- d) *outdoor recreation*
- e) *protection, enhancement and management of the natural and historic environment*
- f) *community facilities and/or their upgrades*
- g) *improvements to the public realm*
- h) *service and utilities infrastructure*
- i) *recycling and waste facilities.*

31. The strategic policy for Housing in Settlement Limits is set out in Part 1 of the Plan Strategy. Strategic Policy 08 Housing in Settlements states that:

*The Plan will support development proposals that:*

- a) *are in accordance with the Strategic Housing Allocation provided in*

*Table 3*

- b) *facilitate new residential development which respects the surrounding context and promotes high quality design within settlements*
- c) *promote balanced local communities with a mixture of house types of different size and tenure including affordable and specialised housing*
- d) *encourage compact urban forms and appropriate densities while protecting the quality of the urban environment.*

32. The following operational policies in Part 2 of the Plan Strategy also apply.

### **Housing in Settlements**

33. As this application is for new residential development policy HOU1 - New Residential Development states that:

*Planning permission will be granted for new residential development in settlements in the following circumstances:*

- a) *on land zoned for residential use*
- b) *on previously developed land (brownfield sites) or as part of mixed-use development*
- c) *in designated city and town centres, and within settlement development limits of the city, towns, greater urban areas, villages and small settlements*
- d) *living over the shop schemes within designated city and town centres, or as part of mixed-use development.*

*The above policy applies to all residential uses as set out in Part C of the Schedule to the Planning (Use Classes) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015 (or as amended).*

34. Policy HOU3 - Site Context and Characteristics of New Residential Development states:

*Planning permission will be granted for new residential development where it will create a quality and sustainable residential environment which respects the existing site context and characteristics. An overall design concept, in accordance with Policy HOU6 must be submitted for all residential proposals and must demonstrate that a proposal draws upon the positive aspects of, and respects the local character, appearance and environmental quality of the surrounding area. Proposals for residential development will be expected to conform to all the following criteria:*

- a) *the development respects the surrounding context, by creating or enhancing a local identity and distinctiveness that reinforces a sense of place, and is appropriate to the character and topography of the site in terms of layout, scale, proportions, massing and appearance of buildings, structures and landscaped and hard surfaced areas*
- b) *archaeological, historic environment and landscape characteristics/features are identified and, where appropriate, protected and suitably integrated into the overall design and layout of the development.*

*For new residential development in areas of distinctive townscape character, including Conservation Areas and Areas of Townscape or Village Character, an increased residential density will only be allowed in exceptional circumstances.*

*All development should be in accordance with available published space standards.*

35. Policy HOU4 - Design in New Residential Development states:

*Proposals for residential development will be expected to conform to all the following design criteria:*

- a) *the design of the development must draw upon the best local architectural form, materials and detailing*
- b) *landscaped areas using appropriate locally characteristic or indigenous species and private open space must form an integral part of a proposal's open space and where appropriate will be required along site boundaries to soften the visual impact of the development and assist in its integration with the surrounding area*
- c) *where identified as a Key Site Requirement adequate provision is made for necessary local community facilities, to be provided by the developer*
- d) *residential development should be brought forward in line with the following density bands:*
  - *City Centre Boundary 120-160 dwellings per hectare*
  - *Settlement Development Limits of City, Towns and Greater Urban Areas: 25-35 dwellings per hectare*
  - *Settlement Development Limits of Villages and small settlements 20-25 dwellings per hectare.*
  - *Within the above designated areas, increased housing density above the indicated bands will be considered in town centres and those locations that benefit from high accessibility to public transport facilities*
- e) *a range of dwellings should be proposed that are accessible in their design to provide an appropriate standard of access for all. The design of dwellings should ensure they are capable of providing accommodation that is wheelchair accessible for those in society who are mobility impaired. A range of dwelling types and designs should be provided to prevent members of society from becoming socially excluded*
- f) *dwellings should be designed to be energy and resource efficient and, where practical should include integrated renewable energy technologies to minimise their impact on the environment*
- g) *a proposed site layout must indicate safe and convenient access through provision of walking and cycling infrastructure, both within the development and linking to existing or planned networks; meet the needs of mobility impaired persons; and respect existing public rights of way*
- h) *adequate and appropriate provision is made for car and bicycle parking including where possible electric vehicle charging points*
- i) *the design and layout must not create conflict with adjacent land uses and there is no unacceptable adverse effect on existing or proposed properties in terms of overlooking, loss of light, overshadowing, noise or other disturbance*

- j) *the design and layout should where possible include use of permeable paving and sustainable drainage.*
- k) *the design and layout design must demonstrate appropriate provision is made for householder waste storage and its collection can be facilitated without impairment to the access and maneuverability of waste service vehicles.*
- l) *the development is designed to deter crime and promote personal safety.*
- m) *Any proposal for residential development which fails to produce an appropriate quality of design will not be permitted, even on land identified for residential use in a development plan.*

36. The Justification and Amplification states that:

*Please note the Supplementary Planning Guidance on design of residential development that will support the implementation of this policy.*

37. It also states that:

*Accessible Accommodation*

*Design standards are encouraged to meet the varying needs of occupiers and be easily capable of accommodating adaptations. Developers should ensure that a range of dwelling sizes (including internal layout and the number of bedrooms) is provided to meet a range of housing needs that facilitate integration and the development of mixed communities.*

38. This proposal is for 23 dwellings on a site that measures 1.87 hectares (albeit a large part of this is existing on a new road).

39. The site is more than one-hectare. Policy HOU5 - Public Open Space in New Residential Development states that:

*Adequate provision must be made for green and blue infrastructure in public open space and for open space that links with green and blue infrastructure where possible and provides pedestrian and cycle linkages to nearby public amenity spaces. Proposals for new residential development of 25 or more units, or on sites of one hectare or more, must provide public open space as an integral part of the development, subject to the following:*

- a) *the open space must be at least 10% of the total site area*
- b) *for development proposals of 300 or more units, or on sites of 15 hectares or more, the open space must be at least 15% of the total site area.*

*The following exceptions to the above open space provision will apply where:*

- a) *the residential development is designed to integrate with and make use of adjoining public open space*
- b) *the provision of open space below 10% of the total site area if the proposal is located within a city or town centre or it is demonstrated that it is close to and would benefit from ease of access to existing public open space*
- c) *in the case of apartment developments or specialist housing (see Policy HOU11) where a commensurate level of private communal open space is*

*being provided.*

*Development proposals of 100 units or more, or on sites of 5 hectares or more, must be provided with an equipped children's play area unless one already exists within a reasonable and safe walking distance (generally around 400 metres) of the majority of the units within the proposal.*

*Public open space required by this policy will be expected to conform to all of the following criteria:*

- *it is designed as an integral part of the development with easy and safe access from the dwellings*
- *it is of demonstrable recreational or amenity value*
- *it is designed, wherever possible, to be multi-functional*
- *its design, location and appearance take into account the needs of disabled persons and it respects the amenity of nearby residents*
- *landscape and heritage features are retained and incorporated in its design and layout.*

*In all cases developers will be responsible for the laying out and landscaping of public open space required under this policy.*

*Developers must demonstrate that suitable arrangements will be put in place for the future management and maintenance in perpetuity of areas of public open space required under this policy.*

40. *As more than five dwellings are proposed there is a need to consider the requirement for affordable housing. Policy HOU10 - Affordable Housing in Settlements states that:*

*Where the need for Affordable Housing is identified, through the Housing Needs Assessment on sites of more than 0.5 hectares or comprising of 5 residential units or more, proposals will only be permitted where provision is made for a minimum 20% of all units to be affordable. This provision will be secured and agreed through a Section 76 Planning Agreement.*

*All developments incorporating affordable housing should be designed to integrate with the overall scheme with no significant distinguishable design differences, in accordance with any other relevant policies contained within this Plan Strategy.*

*In exceptional circumstances where it is demonstrated that the affordable housing requirement cannot be met, alternative provision must be made by the applicant, or an appropriate financial contribution in lieu must be agreed through a Section 76 Planning Agreement. Such agreements must contribute to the objective of creating mixed and balanced communities.*

*Proposals for the provision of specialist accommodation for a group of people with specific needs (such as purpose-built accommodation for the elderly, Policy HOU11) will not be subject to the requirements of this policy.*

*Windfall sites will be encouraged for the development of affordable housing in suitable and accessible locations.*

*By exception, proposals for affordable housing could be permitted on land identified as open space, in accordance with Policy OS1, where it can be demonstrated that all of the following criteria have been met:*

- a) *a demonstrable need has been identified by the Northern Ireland Housing Executive*
- b) *the application is made by a registered Housing Association or the Northern Ireland Housing Executive*
- c) *the proposal will bring substantial community benefits that decisively outweigh the loss of the open space.*

*Development proposals will not be supported where lands have been artificially divided for the purposes of circumventing this policy requirement.*

41. The Justification and Amplification states that:

*The policy requires a minimum provision of 20% of units as affordable housing. Where up to date evidence indicates a requirement for a higher proportion of affordable housing, the council will expect developments to provide this. Where appropriate this may be indicated through key site requirements within the Local Policies Plan. It may also be secured through discussions with applicants on a case-by-case basis as part of the development management process.*

42. The Glossary associated with Part 2 of the Plan Strategy states that

*Affordable Housing – affordable housing is:*

- a) *Social rented housing; or*
- b) *Intermediate housing for sale; or*
- c) *Intermediate housing for rent,*

*that is provided outside of the general market, for those whose needs are not met by the market.*

*Affordable housing which is funded by Government must remain affordable or alternatively there must be provision for the public subsidy to be repaid or recycled in the provision of new affordable housing.*

### **Natural Heritage**

43. Given this is a large site the potential impact on the natural environment is considered. Policy NH1 European and Ramsar Sites – International states:

*Planning permission will only be granted for a development proposal that, either individually or in combination with existing and/or proposed plans or projects, is not likely to have a significant effect on:*

- a) *a European Site (Special Protection Area, proposed Special Protection Area, Special Areas of Conservation, candidate Special Areas of Conservation and Sites of Community Importance)*

*b) a listed or proposed Ramsar Site.*

*Where a development proposal is likely to have a significant effect (either alone or in combination) or reasonable scientific doubt remains, the Council, through consultation with the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA), is required by law to carry out an appropriate assessment of the implications for the site in view of the site's conservation objectives. Only after having ascertained that it will not adversely affect the integrity of the site, can the Council agree to the development and impose appropriate mitigation measures in the form of planning conditions.*

*In exceptional circumstances, a development proposal which could adversely affect the integrity of a European or Ramsar Site may only be permitted where:*

- a) there are no alternative solutions; and*
- b) the proposed development is required for imperative reasons of overriding public interest; and*
- c) compensatory measures are agreed and fully secured.*

*As part of the consideration of exceptional circumstances, where a European or a listed or proposed Ramsar site hosts a priority habitat or priority species listed in Annex I or II of the Habitats Directive, a development proposal will only be permitted when:*

- a) it is necessary for reasons of human health or public safety or there is a beneficial consequence of primary importance to the environment; or*
- b) agreed in advance with the European Commission.*

44. Policy NH2 Species Protected by Law states:

*European Protected Species*

*Planning permission will only be granted for a development proposal that is not likely to harm a European protected species.*

*In exceptional circumstances a development proposal that is likely to harm these species may only be permitted where:*

- a) there are no alternative solutions; and*
- b) it is required for imperative reasons of overriding public interest; and*
- c) there is no detriment to the maintenance of the population of the species at a favourable conservation status; and*
- d) compensatory measures are agreed and fully secured.*

*National Protected Species*

*Planning permission will only be granted for a development proposal that is not likely to harm any other statutorily protected species and which can be adequately mitigated or compensated against.*

*Development proposals are required to be sensitive to all protected species, and sited and designed to protect the, their habitats and prevent deterioration and destruction of their breeding sites or resting places. Seasonal factors will also be taken into account.*

45. Policy NH5 - Habitats, Species or Features of Natural Heritage Importance states that:

*Planning permission will only be granted for a development proposal which is not likely to result in the unacceptable adverse impact on, or damage to known:*

- a) *priority habitats*
- b) *priority species*
- c) *active peatland*
- d) *ancient and long-established woodland*
- e) *features of earth science conservation importance*
- f) *features of the landscape which are of major importance for wild flora and fauna*
- g) *rare or threatened native species*
- h) *wetlands (includes river corridors)*
- i) *other natural heritage features worthy of protection including trees and woodland.*

*A development proposal which is likely to result in an unacceptable adverse impact on, or damage to, habitats, species or features listed above may only be permitted where the benefits of the proposed development outweigh the value of the habitat, species or feature.*

*In such cases, appropriate mitigation and/or compensatory measures will be required.*

### **Access and Transport**

46. The application proposes the use of an existing access from the Millmount Road. Policy TRA1 - Creating an Accessible Environment states that:

*The external layout of all development proposals will incorporate, were appropriate:*

- a) *facilities to aid accessibility e.g. level access to buildings, provision of dropped kerbs and tactile paving etc, together with the removal of any unnecessary obstructions*
- b) *user friendly and convenient movement along pathways and an unhindered approach to buildings*
- c) *priority pedestrian and cycling movement within and between land uses*
- d) *ease of access to car parking reserved for disabled or other users, public transport facilities and taxi ranks.*

*Public buildings will only be permitted where they are designed to provide suitable access for customers, visitors and employees.*

*Access to existing buildings and their surroundings should be improved as opportunities arise through alterations, extensions and changes of use.*

*Submission of a Transport Assessment Form (TAF) and a Design and Access Statement may also be required to accompanying development proposals.*

47. Policy TRA 2 – Access to Public Roads states:

*Planning permission will only be granted for a development proposal involving direct access, or the intensification of the use of an existing access, onto a public road where:*

- a) *it will not prejudice road safety or significantly inconvenience the flow of vehicles; and,*
- b) *it does not conflict with Policy TRA3 Access to Protected Routes.*

*Consideration will also be given to the nature and scale of the development, character of existing development, the contribution of the proposal to the creation of a quality environment, the location and number of existing accesses and the standard of the existing road network together with the speed and volume of traffic using the adjacent public road and any expected increase.*

48. The justification and amplification states that:

*For development proposals involving a replacement dwelling in the countryside, where an existing access is available but does not meet the current standards, the Council would encourage the incorporation of improvements to the access in the interests of road safety.*

49. In curtilage and visitor parking is proposed. Policy TRA7 – Car Parking and Servicing Arrangements states:

*Development proposals will provide adequate provision for car parking and appropriate servicing arrangements. The precise amount of car parking will be determined according to the specific characteristics of the development and its location having regard to published standards or any reduction provided for in an area of parking restraint designated in the Local Development Plan. Proposals should not prejudice road safety or significantly inconvenience the flow of vehicles.*

*Beyond areas of parking restraint, a reduced level of car parking provision may be acceptable in the following circumstances:*

- a) *where, through a Transport Assessment or accompanying Travel Plan, it forms part of a package of measures to promote alternative transport modes*
- b) *where the development is in a highly accessible location well served by public transport*
- c) *where the development would benefit from spare capacity available in nearby public car parks or adjacent on street car parking*

*d) where shared car parking is a viable option*

*e) where the exercise of flexibility would assist in the conservation of the historic or natural environment, would aid rural regeneration, facilitate a better quality of development or the beneficial re-use of an existing building.*

*Proposals involving car parking in excess of the Department's published standards will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances, subject to the submission of a Transport Assessment outlining alternatives.*

*A proportion of the spaces to be provided will be reserved for people with disabilities.*

*Car parking proposals should include an appropriate number of reserved electric charging point spaces and their associated equipment.*

*Where a reduced level of car parking provision is applied or accepted, this will not normally apply to the number of reserved spaces to be provided.*

### **Historic Environment and Archaeology**

50. Although subject to a previous application process and acknowledging part of the site is cleared and used for the storage of building materials the application site remains within a consultation zone of archaeological sites and monuments and also in close proximity to Millmount House a listed building which as previously stated is within the site but excluded as part of this proposal. The nearest proposed dwelling is 24 metres from the Listed Building

51. Policy HE2 The Preservation of Archaeological Remains of Local Importance and their Settings states:

*Proposals which would adversely affect archaeological sites or monuments which are of local importance, or their settings shall only be permitted where the Council considers that the need for the proposed development or other material considerations outweigh the value of the remains and/or their settings.*

52. Policy HE3 Archaeological Assessment and Evaluation states:

*Where the impact of a development proposal on important archaeological remains is unclear, or the relative importance of such remains is uncertain, the Council will require developers to provide further information in the form of an archaeological assessment or an archaeological evaluation. Where such information is requested but not made available the Council will refuse planning permission.*

53. Policy HE4 Archaeological Mitigation states:

*Where the Council is minded to grant planning permission for development which will affect sites known or likely to contain archaeological remains, the Council will impose planning conditions to ensure that appropriate measures are taken for the identification and mitigation of the archaeological impacts of the development, including where appropriate completion of a licensed excavation*

*and recording examination and archiving of remains before development commences or the preservation of remains in situ.*

54. Policy HE9 Development affecting the Setting of a Listed Building states:

*Proposals which would adversely affect the setting of a listed building will not be permitted. Development proposals will normally only be considered appropriate where all the following criteria are met:*

- a) the detailed design respects the listed building in terms of scale, height, massing and alignment*
- b) the works and architectural details should use quality materials and techniques (traditional and/or sympathetic) in keeping with the listed building*
- c) the nature of the use proposed respects the character of the setting of the building.*

### **Flooding**

55. Given the size of the site and the amount of hardstanding proposed flooding and drainage are also considered.

56. Policy FLD1 Development in Fluvial (River) Flood Plains states

*New development will not be permitted within the 1 in 100 year fluvial floodplain (AEP of 1%) plus the latest mapped climate change allowance, unless the applicant can demonstrate that the proposal constitutes an exception to the policy.*

57. Policy FLD3 Development and Surface Water (Pluvial) Flood Risk Outside Flood Plains states:

*A Drainage Assessment (DA) will be required for development proposals that exceed any of the following thresholds:*

- a) a residential development of 10 or more units*
- b) a development site in excess of 1 hectare*
- c) a change of use involving new buildings and/or hard surfacing exceeding 1,000 square metres in area.*

*A DA will also be required for any development proposal, except for minor development, where:*

- it is located in an area where there is evidence of historical flooding.*
- surface water run-off from the development may adversely impact on other development or features of importance to nature conservation, archaeology or historic environment features.*

*A development requiring a DA will be permitted where it is demonstrated through the DA that adequate measures will be put in place so as to effectively mitigate the flood risk to the proposed development and from the development elsewhere. If a DA*

*is not required, but there is potential for surface water flooding as shown on the surface water layout of DfI Flood Maps NI, it remains the responsibility of the developer to mitigate the effects of flooding and drainage as a result of the development.*

*Where the proposed development is also located within a fluvial flood plain, then Policy FLD1 will take precedence.*

## **Renewable Energy**

58. The use of renewable energy is encouraged in new residential development in the Plan Strategy. Policy RE1 Renewable Energy Development states:

*The generation of energy from renewable resources will be permitted provided the proposal, and any associated buildings and infrastructure, will not result in an unacceptable adverse impact on:*

- a) public safety, human health, or residential amenity*
- b) visual amenity and landscape character*
- c) biodiversity or the natural or historic environment*
- d) local natural resources, such as air quality or water quality or quantity*
- e) public access to the countryside. Proposals will be expected to be located at, or as close as possible to, the resources needed for that particular technology, unless it can be demonstrated that the benefits of the scheme outweigh the need for transportation of raw materials.*

*Proposals likely to result in unavoidable environmental damage should indicate how this will be minimised and mitigated.*

*The wider environmental, economic and social benefits of all proposals for renewable energy projects are material considerations that will be given appropriate weight in determining whether planning permission should be granted.*

*Any renewable energy development on active peatland will not be permitted unless there are imperative reasons of overriding public interest as defined under The Conservation (Natural Habitats, etc) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1995 as amended.*

## **Wind Energy Development**

*For wind farm development a separation distance of 10 times rotor diameter to occupied property, with a minimum distance of not less than 500m will generally apply.*

59. Policy RE2 Integrated Renewable Energy states:

*Planning permission will be granted for a development proposal which integrates renewable energy technology including micro-generation and passive solar design (PSD) in its layout, siting and design, where it meets the provisions of Policy RE1 and provided the technology is appropriate to the location in terms of any visual or amenity impact it may have.*

Waste Management.

60. Policy WM 2 - Treatment of Waste Water states:

*Development proposals to provide mains sewage Wastewater Treatment Works (WwTWs) will be permitted where it is demonstrated to the Council there is a need for new or extended capacity requirements and the new facilities comply with the requirements of Policy WM1.*

*Development relying on non mains sewage treatment will only be permitted where it is demonstrated to the Council and its statutory consultees that there is sufficient capacity to discharge treated effluent to a watercourse and that this will not create or add to a pollution problem or create or add to flood risk.*

## Regional Policy and Guidance

### Regional Policy

61. The SPPS Edition 2 was published in September 2025. It is the most recent revision to regional planning policy, and it is stated at paragraph 1.5 that:

*The provisions of the SPPS apply to the whole of Northern Ireland. They must be taken into account in the preparation of Local Development Plans (LDP) and are material to all decisions on individual planning applications and appeals.*

62. Paragraph 2.1 of the SPPS Edition 2 recognises that an objective of the planning system is to secure the orderly and consistent development of land whilst furthering sustainable development and improving well-being.

63. It states that:

*planning system should positively and proactively facilitate development that contributes to a more socially economically and environmentally sustainable Northern Ireland. Planning authorities should therefore simultaneously pursue social and economic priorities alongside the careful management of our built and natural environments for the overall benefit of our society.*

64. Paragraph 3.6 of the SPPS Edition 2 states:

*planning authorities should make efficient use of existing capacities of land, buildings and infrastructure, including support for town centre and regeneration priorities in order to achieve sustainable communities where people want to live, work and play now and into the future. Identifying previously developed land within settlements including sites which may have environmental constraints (e.g. land contamination), can assist with the return to productive use of vacant or underused land. This can help deliver more attractive environments, assist with economic regeneration and renewal, and reduce the need for green field development.*

65. Paragraph 3.8 of the SPPS Edition 2 states:

*Under the SPPS, the guiding principle for planning authorities in determining planning applications is that sustainable development should be permitted, having regard to the development plan and all other material considerations, unless the proposed development will cause demonstrable harm to interests of acknowledged importance. In practice this means that development that accords with an up-to-date development plan should be approved and proposed development that conflicts with an up-to-date development plan should be refused, unless other material considerations indicate otherwise.*

66. Paragraph 6.232 of the SPPS Edition 2 states:

*In plan-making and decision-taking, planning authorities should encourage and support the appropriate use of micro-generation energy, including the retrofitting of renewable and low carbon energy technologies.*

67. The site is proposed to be developed for housing development. It is stated at paragraph 6.136 that:

*The policy approach must be to facilitate an adequate and available supply of quality housing to meet the needs of everyone; promote more sustainable housing development within existing urban areas; and the provision of mixed housing development with homes in a range of sizes and tenures. This approach to housing will support the need to maximise the use of existing infrastructure and services, and the creation of more balanced sustainable communities.*

68. There are no new implications for this proposal following the publication of the SPPS Edition 2, only paragraph 6.232 is added and the need for integrated renewable energy was previously taken account of in the preparation of policy within the LDP Plan Strategy. The requirements of policy RE2 are considered later in the report.

### **Retained Regional Guidance**

69. Whilst not policy, the following guidance documents remain material considerations.

### Creating Places

70. The policy requires the guidance in the 'Creating Places – Achieving Quality in Residential Developments' (May 2000) to also be considered.
71. The guide is structured around the process of design and addresses the following matters:
  - the analysis of a site and its context;
  - strategies for the overall design character of a proposal;
  - the main elements of good design; and
  - detailed design requirements.

72. Paragraph 7.16 provides guidance on separation distances stating:

*Where the development abuts the private garden areas of existing properties, a separation distance greater than 20 metres will generally be appropriate to minimise overlooking, with a minimum of around 10 metres between the rear of new houses and the common boundary.*

73. Paragraphs 5.19 – 5.20 provides guidance on the level of private open space provision as follows:

*Provision should be calculated as an average space standard for the development as a whole and should be around 70 square metres per house or greater. Garden sizes larger than the average will generally suit dwellings for use by families. An area less than around 40 square metres will generally be unacceptable.*

### Development Control Advice Note 8 – Housing in Existing Urban Areas

74. Paragraph 4.10 states that:

*Planning Service will expect applicants and designers to carry out an appraisal of the local context, which takes into account the character of the surrounding area; and new development should respect the architectural, streetscape and landscape character of the area.*

## **Assessment**

### Policy HOU 1 – New Residential Development

75. This application is for 23 residential units within the Settlement Development Limit of Metropolitan Castlereagh. Significant material weight is attached to the proposed housing zoning in draft BMAP for the reasons set out earlier in this report. As new residential development is acceptable on zoned housing land the policy tests of Policy HOU1 are met.

Policy HOU3 – Site Context and Characteristics of New Residential Development

76. The application site is a portion of land within the wider Millmount housing development.
77. The surrounding developed land contains a mix of detached, semi-detached, terrace housing and apartment blocks. The dwellings are set in medium sized plots with in-curtilage parking and communal off-street parking. Areas of open space and two playparks are also provided as part of the wider development.
78. This proposal comprises 7 detached dwellings and 8 pairs of semi-detached dwellings (16 units).
79. The dwellings vary in size and design but are typical of a suburban residential setting.
80. The form and general arrangement of the buildings are characteristic of those built and currently under construction within Millmount Village.
81. The plot sizes and general layout proposed is consistent with and comparable with other built development in the general vicinity of the site.
82. Based on a review of the information provided, it is considered that the character of the area would not be significantly changed by the proposed residential development, and it is considered that the established residential character of the area would not be harmed by either the form or scale of development proposed.
83. The layout of the rooms in each of the units, the position of the windows and separation distance also ensure that there is no overlooking into the private amenity space of neighbouring properties.
84. The separations distances between the existing and proposed development are acceptable and would minimise any overlooking from existing properties.
85. The buildings are not dominant or overbearing and no loss of light would be caused.
86. Having regard to this detail and the relationship between the buildings in each plot and having considered the guidance recommended in the Creating Place document, criteria (a) of policy HOU3 is met.
87. With regard to criteria (b), the site is within a consultation zone surrounding archaeological sites and monuments. It is considered that provided archaeological mitigation is conditioned in any planning permission that the proposal would not have a negative impact on any archaeological interests.
88. The site is also adjacent to Millmount House which is a Grade B1 Listed Building. Following consultation with Historic Environment Division, it is considered that the proposal will have no adverse impact on the setting of the listed building due to the layout and design of the proposal and the separation distance to the nearest

proposed dwelling.

89. There is a band of trees to the north of the site just outside the application boundary which are to be retained as part of the wider scheme. The proposed scheme does not cause any additional impact as the majority are to be retained as part of another planning permission and the two that were scheduled to be felled were to facilitate the entrance road into the site (which is also in accordance with planning permission LA05/2022/1005/F which overlaps slightly with the boundary of this application).
90. No other landscape characteristics/features have been identified that required integration into the overall design and layout of the development and as such all the requirements of policy HOU3 are met.

#### Policy HOU4 – Design in New Residential Development

91. A number of different house types proposed, and a description of these house types is outlined below.
92. Site numbers 572, 588 and 589 consist of house type SR3.6 which are three-bedroom two storey dwelling with a single storey rear projection sunroom and has a ridge height of 9.1m above the finished floor level.
93. Site numbers 573, 574, 575, 576, 582 and 583 consist of house type MV4 which are four-bedroom three storey semi-detached dwellings with a ridge height of 9.1m above the finished floor level.
94. Site numbers 577, 578, 584 and 585 consist of house type LAQ01 which are two-bedroom two storey semi-detached dwellings with a ridge height of 7.4m above the finished floor level.
95. Site number 581 consists of house type SR2.1 which is a three-bedroom two storey detached dwelling with a ridge height of 9.0m above the finished floor level.
96. Site numbers 579 and 580 consist of house type SR15.2 which are three-bedroom two storey semi-detached dwellings with a single storey rear sunroom projection. They have a ridge height of 8.7m above the finished floor level.
97. Site numbers 587 and 590 consist of house type A which are four-bedroom two storey detached dwellings with a single storey rear projection garden room with attached covered decking area to the rear. They have a ridge height of 8.1 above the finished floor level.
98. Site number 586 consists of house type B which is a four-bedroom two storey detached dwelling with single storey and two storey projection to the rear. It has a ridge height of 8.5m above the finished floor level.
99. Site numbers 591 and 592 consists of house type MV3(S2) which are three-bedroom two storey semi-detached dwellings with a single storey rear projection sunroom, and one has a single storey front porch. They have a ridge height of

8.4m above the finished floor level.

100. Site numbers 593 and 594 consists of house type MV3(S1) which are three-bedroom two storey semi-detached dwellings and one has a single storey rear projection sunroom and the other has a side single storey porch area. They have a ridge height of 8.1m above the finished floor level.
101. There are also two difference garage types proposed. There is garage type Ga.3h to site 588 and garage type Ga.3 to site 589. They are single storey garages designed to match the detail and finishes of the associated dwelling house.
102. The external material finishes include concrete interlocking roof tiles grey or blue/grey in colour; walls to be smooth render in off white or white in colour and select facing brick and the windows and doors are a mixture of hardwood and upvc with rainwater goods to be uPVC pipes and guttering. These are acceptable for the site and its location in the urban context.
103. The size and design of the buildings means that they are not dominant or overbearing. This in combination with the separation distances between the properties will ensure that no loss of light to any adjacent property will arise.
104. The layout of the rooms in each of the units, the position of the windows along with the separation distance also ensures that there is no overlooking into the private amenity space of neighbouring properties.
105. Millmount House is located adjacent and east of the site and was excluded from the housing zoning. The proposed dwellings are set to the side and south and west of Millmount House with the closest dwelling having a separation distance of 24 metres from the listed building with the road between. This ensures that there is no adverse impact on the amenity of the listed building by reason of overlooking or overshadowing/loss of light. The development on the site does not conflict with surrounding land uses.
106. The proposed layout is consistent with the type of housing found in the surrounding area. The proposed dwellings all face towards the road network, in curtilage parking spaces are provided for each dwelling.
107. Detail submitted with the application demonstrates that the provision of private amenity space varies from 27 square metres at the lower end, up to a maximum of 356 square metres. An average of 100.8 square metres is provided across the site which is far in excess of the guidance contained within Creating Places for a medium density housing development.
108. It can be seen from the above that seven of the sites offer a private rear amenity provision well in excess of the 70 square metres recommended in the guidance, with one plot having a particularly large area to the rear providing 356 square metres of amenity space.
109. The plots associated with the more affordable housing offer a slightly less amenity space however for these dwellings it is not significantly less than that recommended. When the overall site is viewed as a whole, it can be said that

there is a variety of garden sizes provided, giving greater choice for residents, which is outlined in the justification and amplification section of Policy HOU4.

110. The agent has also confirmed that the scheme will be constructed in line with current NI Building Regulations which emphasises sustainable design and energy efficiency primarily through a fabric first approach (for example reducing heating costs with good air tightness, thermal performance and reducing the effects of solar gain) and including renewable energy measures, such as solar panels. The specific energy efficient measures proposed in the scheme are outlined below.

#### Photovoltaic (PV) Panels

111. The development incorporates high-efficiency photovoltaic panels strategically positioned on rooftops to maximise solar energy capture. The panels are designed to integrate seamlessly with the architectural aesthetic of the buildings, using low-profile mounting systems to minimise visual prominence.
112. PV panels provide on-site renewable energy generation, significantly reducing reliance on non-renewable energy sources and supporting the council's sustainability objectives. Their placement has been optimized to avoid overshadowing and ensure minimal visual or amenity impact on neighbouring properties, in line with Policy RE1 requirements.

#### Thermally Efficient Insulation and Building Fabric

113. The development employs advanced thermally efficient insulation materials and a high-performance building fabric, including high-quality wall, roofs, and floor insulation, as well as double- or triple-glazed windows. These elements are incorporated into the design to enhance thermal performance and reduce heat loss.
114. The use of thermally efficient insulation and robust building fabric aligns with passive solar design principles, reducing energy demand for heating and cooling. This contributes to the development's energy efficiency, supports Policy RE2's focus on sustainable design, and ensures compliance with building regulations, with no adverse visual or amenity impacts.

#### High-Efficiency Boilers

115. High-efficiency condensing boilers are installed in each dwelling, designed to meet or exceed modern energy performance standards. These systems are compact and integrated within the building's utility spaces to maintain the aesthetic integrity of the development.
116. High-efficiency boilers reduce energy consumption and carbon emissions, supporting the microgeneration focus of Policy RE2. As internal systems, they have no external visual or amenity impacts, making them appropriate for the location and compliant with Policy RE1.

Airtight Construction

- 117. The development is designed to achieve a high level of airtightness, meeting or exceeding the requirements of current building regulations. This is accomplished through meticulous construction techniques, including sealed joints, high-quality membranes, and airtight window and door installations.
- 118. Airtight construction minimises heat loss and enhances energy efficiency, aligning with Policy RE2's emphasis on sustainable design. This measure supports the development's overall energy performance without impacting the visual or amenity character of the site, ensuring compliance with Policy RE1.

Low-Energy Light Fittings

- 119. Low-energy LED light fittings are installed throughout each dwelling, both internally and externally, to reduce electricity consumption. These fittings are selected for their compatibility with the development's aesthetic and functional requirements.
- 120. The use of low-energy light fittings contributes to the development's sustainability by reducing energy demand, supporting Policy RE2's focus on renewable and efficient energy use. External lighting is designed to minimise light pollution, ensuring no adverse amenity impact on the surrounding area.

Climate-Resilient Drainage System

- 121. The drainage system is designed to meet Northern Ireland Water's consent requirements, incorporating sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) to manage surface water effectively and compensate for climate change impacts, such as increased rainfall and flood risk.
- 122. The climate-resilient drainage system supports the sustainability aims of Policy RE2 by ensuring the development is adaptable to environmental challenges. It is integrated into the site layout to maintain amenity value and avoid adverse impacts on neighbouring properties or the local environment.
- 123. For the reasons outlined above, criteria (a), (e) and (f) of policy HOU 4 are met.
- 124. There is no requirement for the provision of local community or neighbourhood facility for this scale of development. A local neighbourhood facility has however been provided within the larger development at Coopers Mill and the site is accessible to shops and other neighbourhood facilities in Dundonald. Criteria (c) of policy HOU 4 is met.
- 125. Boundary treatments around and within the site are proposed to separate each unit and details of these are provided in the proposed site boundary detail drawing. There is a mixture of fencing and boundary walls proposed. These are acceptable for this type of development in the urban context.

126. Landscaped areas are proposed as part of the overall development. The submitted landscape plan details the proposed landscaping to the area with the trees to be retained and to the boundaries and within the overall site. The proposed landscaping uses appropriate spaces of planting, and it softens the visual impact of the development. For the reasons outlined above, criteria (b) of policy HOU 4 are considered to be met.
127. With regard to criteria (d) the proposal is for 23 units on a site measuring 1.87 hectares which is not considered to be overdevelopment, and in line with policy HOU 4.
128. The proposed development will provide a residential density not significantly lower than that found in the established residential area and the proposed pattern of development is in keeping with the overall character and environmental quality of the established residential area. The average unit size exceeds space standards set out in supplementary planning guidance.
129. The internal road layout provides for safe and convenient access through the site, and the provision of dropped kerbs and tactile paving will also serve to meet the needs of mobility impaired persons. Adequate and appropriate provision is also made for in curtilage parking which meet the required parking standards. Criteria (g) and (h) of policy HOU4 are met.
130. The careful delineation of plots with appropriate fencing and privacy walls will serve to deter crime and promote personal safety. Criteria (i) is met.
131. Permeable paving and sustainable drainage are proposed as part of the development in line with criteria (j) of the policy is met.
132. Provision is available for householder waste storage within the driveways of each dwelling, and its safe collection can be facilitated without impairment to the access manoeuvrability of waste service vehicles.

#### Policy HOU 5 - Public Open Space in New Residential Development

133. Detail submitted with the application indicates that the site does exceed one hectare. As such open space must be provided as an integral part of this development.
134. There are three main areas of green open space are shown to be provided in the area, the area to the western side of the site, an area around Millmount House Listed Building and an area to the north of the site, as detailed in the maintained open space drawing.
135. The application provides for a change of house type for 23 dwellings that were previously approved as part of a wider housing development under Y/2009/0303/RM. Detail submitted with this application demonstrates that areas of open space were provided throughout the wider Millmount development. The site is also easily accessible to the Comber Greenway.
136. It is accepted that adequate provision is made in the wider scheme and that within the context of policy HOU 5 the thresholds and requirements for open

space is met.

### 137. Policy HOU10 - Affordable Housing

138. Policy HOU10 requires a 20% affordable housing provision. In the context of the proposed scheme, this equates to 5 units.
139. A draft Section 76 agreement has been submitted for the Councils consideration. It details that 5 units for affordable provision are to be provided within the proposed development at sites 577, 578, 584, 585 and 591. No more than 13 of the private dwellings will be constructed until the five affordable housing units are constructed and available for occupation
140. The affordable housing tests associated with Policy HOU10 of the Plan Strategy are therefore capable of being met subject to this provision being secured and agreed through a Section 76 Planning Agreement.

### **Natural Heritage**

141. A Biodiversity Checklist and Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and Bat Survey carried out by RPS group has been submitted in support of the application. An outline Construction Environmental Management Plan has also been submitted.
142. The Ecological Survey was carried out in April 2022 and included an Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey, an Ecological Badger Survey, Preliminary Roost Assessment of Trees and Preliminary Ecological Appraisal for Bats.
143. NED noted that the Ecological Survey was outside of the 1-year permissible date and requested further surveys. This is dealt with further in this section.
144. The Preliminary Appraisal submitted states that:

*The site of the proposal is not hydrologically directly connected to or located within 100m of any statutory designated sites of local or international importance. The nearest designated site is Dundonald Old railway SLNCI, located approximately 760m northwest of the proposed development boundary. The Enler River is located 54m west of the site boundary. The Enler River is Hydrologically connected to Strangford Lough SAC, SPA, ASSI and Ramsar Site, approximately 6.6km downstream. Pollution prevention measures as detailed in the Outline Construction Environmental Management Plan will be incorporated during the construction phase to prevent sediments and other pollutants entering watercourses. With the implementation of water pollution mitigation measures, there will be no effects to watercourses or downstream designated sites.*

145. With regards to habitats, it states that:

*The site is predominantly an operating construction site, with most of the land comprising of bare earth or gravel with occasional building material stockpiles. Typical common re-colonising plant species are scattered in areas of lower traffic and disturbance. A large earth heap is present in the centre of the site and a smaller heap to the south. These heaps have been partially re-*

*colonised by common agricultural and early colonising species, mainly including Yorkshire fog scattered gorse and broom saplings have also established in places.*

146. With regards to semi-improved neutral grassland, it states:

*An area of unmanaged semi-improved neutral grassland is present in the southwest of the site. Some patches occur in shallow, stoney soils. The species present include typical agricultural grasses.*

147. The Preliminary Ecological Appraisal states:

*Preliminary Ecological Appraisal for Bats*

*The proposed development site adjoins Millmount Village to the east and southwest. To the north and east by the Comber Greenway open space. These nearby areas may provide linkage for commuting or foraging bats; however, the site itself has been highly altered, with limited natural habitats available. The treelines, namely the large mature broadleaved treelines in the northeast which are largely being retained likely support a low number of foraging bats.*

*Given the presence of trees on the site, the site characteristic (active construction site), its connection to residential gardens and its partial connection to the wider countryside, it is considered that the site is of low foraging and commuting suitability.*

*Preliminary Roost Assessment of Trees and Structures*

*From ground level, a knothole type potential roost feature was identified on a mature beech tree which is located within the construction footprint of a proposed roadway. The feature is located approximately 4-5m on the eastern aspect. This tree will require felling to facilitate the development. To the immediate east, knothole PRFs were also identified on two horse chestnut trees. These features are considered to have moderate roosting suitability.*

*Badger and Otter*

*No evidence of badger or otter was recorded within 30m of the site boundary.*

148. Details of mitigation/recommendations include the removal of any vegetation including hedgerows and shrubs should take place outside the bird breeding season which extends between 1<sup>st</sup> March and 31<sup>st</sup> August inclusive to ensure breeding birds are protected from harm.
149. The report also recommends that a Lighting Strategy for the proposed development should be designed in accordance with the Institution of Lighting Professionals (ILP2011) and Bats and Artificial Lighting in the UK (ILP 2018) and that artificial lighting will only be installed where and when necessary.

150. In line with NIEA Standing Advice and where badger activity is identified, all works should cease immediately, and further advice sought from NIEA Wildlife Team. This advice can be added as an informative,
151. As recommended in the PEA, a Bat Survey was carried out at three trees on the site and the findings submitted for consideration. The three trees have been classified as having moderate bat roost potential. Emergence and re-entry surveys were carried out.
152. The report details that bat activity was relatively low, with occasional brief bat passes and foraging and that for most of the duration of both surveys, bats were absent from the survey area. It also details that no bats were recorded emerging or entering and therefore there is no evidence to suggest that they are bat roosts. With the implementation of mitigation measures there will be no adverse impacts upon the local bat population.
153. The bat survey report recommends that prior to felling of tree, a survey must be carried out under NIEA licence between 15<sup>th</sup> March and 15<sup>th</sup> May or 15<sup>th</sup> August and 31<sup>st</sup> October inclusive, of any given year. If bats are found to be present, NIEA will be contacted for advice. It is also recommended that bat boxes will be erected on the trees which are to be retained on site to compensate for any loss.
154. The above documents were sent to NIEA Natural Environment Division (NED) for consultation. They initially responded noting that the survey assessment is outside the 1-year permissible submission date outlined in the NIEA Survey specifications. Taking a precautionary approach the applicant was asked for an updated bat survey.
155. The agent provided a statement outlining the reason why they felt additional surveys were not required. The statement details further information about the three trees in question, namely trees T1, T2 and T3. The statement concluded that Tree T1 is to be removed and the other two trees are to be retained and protected.
156. Furthermore, the statement outlines that the application boundary for this planning application overlaps with the application boundary for LA05/2022/1005/F. The subject trees are included in both planning application boundaries. LA05/2022/1005/F includes planning permission for the continuation of an internal road through the Millmount site, necessitating the removal of Tree T1.
157. This tree has been felled in accordance with planning permission LA05/2022/1005/F and tree protection measures have been installed to this part of the site to protect Trees T2 and T3 as required by condition 15 of the permission. This part of the site benefits from separate planning permission for the same works which has been implemented. Therefore, there is no need to necessitate further survey work relating to the trees in question.
158. NED have been re-consulted on the proposal and advise that they have considered the impacts of the proposal on designated sites and other natural heritage interests and, on the basis of the information provided, has no concerns.

159. Having regards to the content of the submitted reports and the advice of NED, for the reasons outlined above, it is considered that the proposed development will give rise to no significant adverse effects on habitats or species of ecological or nature conservation value, the proposed development is unlikely to result in any cumulative impact upon these features when considered alone or with other developments nearby and as such NH1, NH2 and NH5 of the Plan Strategy are met.

### **Access Movement and Parking**

160. The P1 Form indicates that the proposal involves the construction of a new access to the public road for both vehicular and pedestrian use.
161. Access to the site will be via Millmount Road which was approved under LA05/2018/0512/F and has been constructed.
162. The detail associated with the application indicates that all dwellings will have at least two in-curtilage car parking spaces.
163. Based on a review of the detail submitted with the application and advice from DfI Roads it is considered that the proposed complies with policy TRA1 of the Plan Strategy in that the detail demonstrates that an accessible environment will be created through the provision of footways.
164. It is also considered having regard to the advice of DfI Roads that the development complies with policy TRA2 of the Plan Strategy in that the detailed road layout plan submitted demonstrates that the site can be connected to the existing road network without prejudice to road safety or significantly inconvenience the flow of traffic. Regard is also had to the nature and scale of the development, the character of the existing development, the location and number of existing accesses and the standard of the existing road network.
165. The proposal is also considered to comply with policy TRA7 of the Plan Strategy in that having reviewed the submitted plans that adequate provision for car parking and appropriate servicing arrangements has been provided so as not to prejudice road safety or inconvenience the flow of traffic.

### **Historic Environment and Archaeology**

#### Policy HE4 - Archaeological Mitigation.

166. Historic Environment Division (Historic Monuments) commented that the application site is in close proximity to a number of recorded archaeological sites and monuments and further archaeological remains have been revealed during phases of the present development, and this archaeological mitigation is still ongoing. Due to this heightened archaeological potential archaeological mitigation would be appropriate consistent with other phases of this development.
167. Historic Environment Division (Historic Monuments) advise that they are content that the proposal satisfies the policy requirements, subject to conditions for the

agreement and implementation of a developer-funded programme of archaeological works.

168. Based on the information submitted and taking on board the advice from HED it is considered that the proposal complies with Policy HE4.

Policy HE9 Development affecting the Setting of a Listed Building

169. The site is in close proximity to Millmount House (Grade B1) which is of special architectural and historic interest and is protected by Section 80 of the Planning Act (NI) 2011.
170. HED Historic Buildings commented that it has considered the impacts of the proposal on the building and based on the information provided, advises that it has no objection to the proposal.
171. Having regard to this advice and noting the closest dwelling is more than 24 metres from the listed building It is considered that policy HE9 is met, and the proposal will have no adverse impact on the setting of the listed building.

**Planning and Flood Risk**

172. The information submitted indicates that water connection would be through the public mains, that the storm water would be disposed of through the mains and that the foul would be disposed with via the mains.
173. There is an undesignated field drain that runs through a portion of the site. And outside the red line and west of the site is the Comber River with intervening land in between.
174. A Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Assessment has been submitted in support of the application. The following issues are highlighted.
175. Rivers Agency Flood Maps indicate that the site is partially located within the floodplain. However, it is known that this mapping is out-dated given known changes to the route and structures along the local watercourses and changes to the terrain due to previous phases of development.
176. The proposal includes the abandonment of the undesignated tributary field drain within the site due to it serving no drainage function and where drainage is replaced by the proposed surface water sewer network serving the site and wider Millmount development. The Flood Model results derived from the proposed scenario model indicate that post-development flood levels are unchanged from the existing baseline scenario.
177. The summary of findings of the Flood Risk Assessment details that the DfI Rivers' flood model for the Millmount Stream and Comber River has been updated by the applicant and the updated flood model confirms that the site is unaffected by the 1% Annual Exceedance Probability and Climate Change floodplain.

178. The undesignated field drain that traverses the site is a tributary of the Comber River. Flood modelling confirms that there is no out of bank flooding from the drain due to backing up of the downstream Comber River flood plain. The applicant proposes to abandon this field drain within the site and advises that post-development flood modelling has confirmed that the abandonment will have no effect on flooding. Policy FLD1 is not engaged, and no land use restriction applies

179. In accordance with policy FLD 3 a Drainage Assessment was submitted. DfI Rivers Agency commented that:

*Rivers Directorate, while not being responsible for the preparation of the Drainage Assessment, accepts its logic and has no reason to disagree with its conclusions.*

*It should be brought to the attention of the applicant that the responsibility for justifying the Drainage Assessment and implementation of the proposed flood risk measures (as laid out in the assessment) rests with the developer and his/her professional advisors.*

*The Drainage Assessment has demonstrated that the design and construction of a suitable drainage network is feasible. It indicates that the 1 in 100-year event including an allowance for climate change and urban creep could be contained within the attenuation system, when discharging at existing field runoff rate, and therefore there will be no exceedance flows during this event. Further assessment of the drainage network will be made by NI Water prior to adoption.*

*However, in order to ensure compliance with LDP 2032, Rivers Directorate requests that the Planning Authority includes a Condition as part of its planning permission if granted.*

180. It is advised that the condition offered in support of the above referenced comments states that prior to construction of the drainage network, a final drainage assessment should be submitted which demonstrates the safe management of any out of sewer flooding emanating from the surface water drainage network in the event of a 1 in 100-year event including an allowance for climate change and urban creep. There is no reason to disagree with the advice that this condition should be included.

181. Turning to policy FLD4, the conditions on the ground and the detail in the Flood Risk Assessment demonstrates that the field drain is not functioning as a watercourse and has no drainage role and is redundant. Its abandonment will not give rise to the impacts that policy FLD4 seeks to control. DfI Rivers Agency have raised no objection to this and there is no reason to disagree with this advice in terms of consideration of the policy requirements.

182. Based on a review of the information and advice received from DfI Rivers, it is accepted that the proposal complies with policies FLD1, 2, 3 and 4 of the Plan Strategy.

## **Waste Management**

183. Information submitted with the application indicates that water connection, surface water and foul sewerage will be through the public mains.
184. NI Water was consulted and recommend approval. They have confirmed that there is available capacity at the Waste-Water Treatment Works and there is a public foul sewer within 20 metres of the proposed development boundary which can adequately service the proposal.
185. Based on the information submitted and taking on board the advice from NI Water, it is considered that the proposal will not adversely affect the water environment and complies with policy WM2.

### Recommendation

186. Based on the above consideration, the recommendation is to approve the application subject to conditions and to the Section 76 planning agreement to ensure that the developer fulfils his obligations with regards to the delivery of affordable housing in accordance with the requirements of policy HOU10 of the Plan Strategy.

### Conditions

187. The following conditions are recommended:

- The development hereby permitted must be begun within five years from the date of this permission.

Reason: As required by Section 61 of the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011.

- No development shall take place until drawings necessary to enable a determination to be made in accordance with Article 3 of the Private Streets (Northern Ireland) Order 1980 have been submitted to, and approved by, the Council.

Reason: To ensure there is a safe and convenient road system to comply with the provisions of the Private Streets (Northern Ireland) Order 1980.

- Prior to the construction of the drainage network, the applicant shall submit a final drainage assessment, compliant with FLD 3, to be agreed with the Planning Authority which demonstrates the safe management of any out of sewer flooding emanating from the surface water drainage network, agreed under Article 161, in a 1 in 100 year event including an allowance for climate change and urban creep.

Reason: In order to safeguard against surface water flood risk to the development and manage and mitigate any increase in surface water flood risk from the development to elsewhere.

- No site works of any nature or development shall take place until a programme of archaeological work (POW) has been prepared by a qualified archaeologist, submitted by the applicant and approved in writing by Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council in consultation with Historic Environment Division, Department for Communities. The POW shall provide for:
  - The identification and evaluation of archaeological remains within the site.
  - Mitigation of the impacts of development through licensed excavation recording or by preservation of remains in-situ.
  - Post-excavation analysis sufficient to prepare an archaeological report, to publication standard if necessary; and
  - Preparation of the digital, documentary and material archive for deposition.

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

- No site works of any nature or development shall take place other than in accordance with the programme of archaeological work approved under condition xxxxx.

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

- A programme of post-excavation analysis, preparation of an archaeological report, dissemination of results and preparation of the excavation archive shall be undertaken in accordance with the programme of archaeological work approved under condition xxxxx. These measures shall be implemented, and a final archaeological report shall be submitted to the Council within 12 months of the completion of archaeological site works, or as otherwise agreed in writing with the Council.

Reason: To ensure that the results of archaeological works are appropriately analysed and disseminated and the excavation archive is prepared to a suitable standard for deposition

- No tree to be retained on the Soft Landscape Proposals Plan (drawing no. 25B published to the Planning Register on 12 February 2025) shall be cut down, uprooted or destroyed or have its roots damaged within the root protection area nor shall arboriculture work or tree surgery take place on any retained tree other than in accordance with the approved plans and particulars, without the written consent of the Council.

Reason: To ensure the continuity of amenity afforded by existing trees.

- If any retained tree is removed, uprooted or destroyed or dies it shall be replaced within the next planting season by another tree or trees in the same location of a species and size as specified by the Council.

Reason: To ensure the continuity of amenity afforded by existing trees.

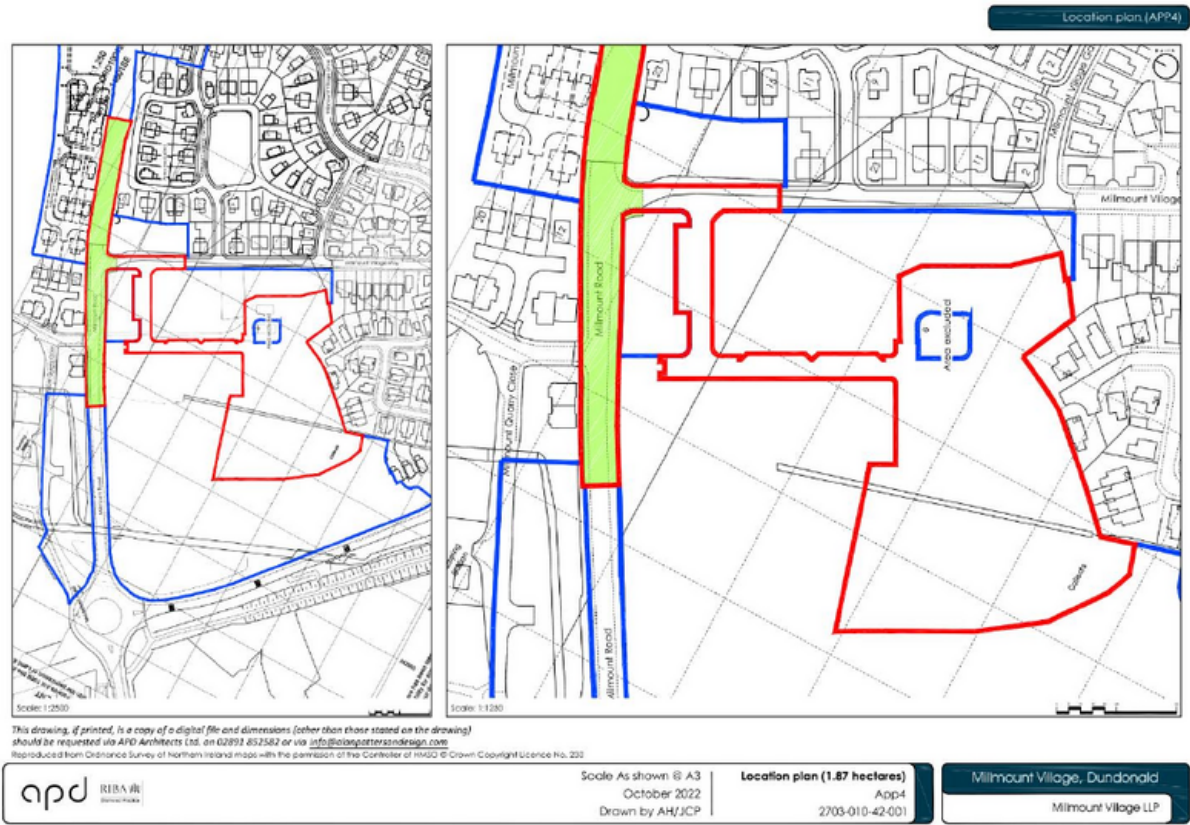
- All hard and soft landscape works shall be carried out in accordance with Drawing No. 25B published to the Planning Register on 12 February 2025 and the approved details. The works shall be carried out no later than the first available planting season after occupation of the first dwelling.

Reason: To ensure the provision, establishment and maintenance of a high standard of landscape.

- If within a period of 5 years from the date of the planting of any tree, shrub or hedge, that tree, shrub or hedge is removed, uprooted or destroyed or dies, or becomes, in the opinion of the Council, seriously damaged or defective, another tree, shrub or hedge of the same species and size as that originally planted shall be planted at the same place, unless the Council gives its written consent to any variation.

Reason: To ensure the provision, establishment and maintenance of a high standard of landscape.

Site Location Plan – LA05/2023/0316/F



## Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council

| Planning Committee    |   |
|-----------------------|---|
| Date of Committee     | 02 February 2026  |
| Committee Interest    | Local Application (Exceptions Apply)  |
| Application Reference | LA05/2024/0768/F  |
| Date of Application   | 24 October 2024   |
| Proposal Description  | Erection of 16 dwellings (social/affordable) and associated/ancillary development to include new accesses, roadways, landscaping and other siteworks. |
| Location              | Lands adjacent to 9 Bridge Cottages Moybrick Road, Dromara  |
| Representations       | Two   |
| Case Officer          | Helen McGuinness  |
| Recommendation        | <b>Approval</b>   |

### Summary of Recommendation

1. This is a local application. It is presented to the Committee for determination in accordance with the Protocol for the Operation of the Committee as the application is subject to a Section 76 planning agreement.
2. It is recommended that planning permission is granted as the proposal is in accordance with the requirements of policies HOU1, HOU3, HOU4 and HOU5 of Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council Plan Strategy 2032 (subsequently referred to as the Plan Strategy) in that the detailed layout and design of the proposed buildings creates a quality residential environment and when the buildings are constructed, they will not adversely impact on the character of the area.
3. The development will also not have a detrimental impact on the amenity of existing residents in properties adjoining the site by reason of overlooking or dominance/ loss of light, in accordance with Policy HOU8.
4. Furthermore, the density is not significantly higher than that found in the established residential area and the proposed pattern of development is in keeping with the overall character and environmental quality of the established residential area.

5. It is considered that the proposal is also in accordance with the requirements of policy HOU10 of the Plan Strategy in that adequate provision is made for affordable housing as an integral part of the development. This provision will be subject to a Section 76 Planning Agreement.
6. The proposal complies with policies NH1, NH2, NH3, NH4 and NH5 of the Plan Strategy in that the detail demonstrates that the development is not likely to harm a European or Ramsar Site, Sites of Nature Conservation Importance, European protected species nor is it likely to result in the unacceptable adverse impact on, or damage to known priority habitats, species or features of Natural Heritage Importance.
5. The proposal complies with policy TRA1 of the Plan Strategy in that the detail demonstrates that an accessible environment will be created through the provision of footways and pedestrian paths.
6. It is also considered that the development complies with policy TRA2 of the Plan Strategy in that the detail submitted demonstrates that the access will not prejudice road safety or significantly inconvenience the flow of traffic. Regard is also had to the nature and scale of the development, the character of the existing development, the location and number of existing accesses and the standard of the existing road network.
7. The proposal is considered to comply with policy TRA7 of the Plan Strategy in that the detail demonstrates that adequate provision for car parking and appropriate servicing arrangements has been provided so as not to prejudice road safety or inconvenience the flow of traffic.
8. The proposed development complies with policy tests set out in policies FLD1, FLD2, FLD3 and FLD5 of the Plan Strategy in that the supporting information provided demonstrates that the development itself lies outside of the 1 in 100 fluvial flood plain, adequate drainage can be provided within the site to service the proposal and that there is sufficient capacity within the existing wastewater treatment works to service the development. Additionally, the proposal will not adversely impact the effectiveness of flood defence and drainage infrastructure. It has also been demonstrated that the condition, management and maintenance regime of the reservoir is appropriate to provide sufficient assurance regarding reservoir safety in line with policy.
9. The proposal is considered to comply with policies HE2, HE3, HE4 and HE9 of the Plan Strategy, in that the proposal will not result in an adverse impact to the historic environment or archaeology or setting of a Listed Building.
10. The proposal complies with Policy RE2 as renewable technologies are incorporated into the design and the scheme will be constructed in line with current NI Building Regulations and the DfC Design Standards which emphasises sustainable design and energy efficiency.

## Description of Site and Surroundings

11. The application site is primarily located within the settlement limit of Dromara to the northwest of the Moybrick Road. A small portion of the site to the north lies outside of the settlement limit.
12. The site consists of scrub grassland. The land is undulating and extends from the road to the River Lagan to the northeast of the site.
13. During the site inspection, the boundaries were observed as follows:
  - Northwest/North - River Lagan
  - Northeast - mature, well-established hedgerows and a two-metre high close board fencing at the rear of the neighbouring dwellings.
  - Southwest - Mature hedging and treeline.
  - South/Southeast - Mature hedging and field gate.

## Surroundings

14. The site is at the edge of the settlement limit of Dromara and the lands to the north and west are mainly in agricultural use and rural in character.
15. There is medium density affordable housing opposite the site at Moybrick Grove and the balance of the lands to the east are primarily comprised of private suburban housing and the area is residential in character.
16. The application site is in proximity to the medieval parish Church of Drumberra, lies just west of the historic core of the seventeenth century settlement of Dromara and is adjacent to a historic crossing point of the Lagan. The site also contains the mill race for a corn mill which is recorded in the Industrial Heritage Record (IHR 03176). The recorded archaeological sites and monuments nearby are indicators of a high archaeological potential for further, previously unrecorded archaeological remains.

## Proposed Development

17. This is a full application for erection of sixteen dwellings and associated/ancillary development to include new accesses, roadways, landscaping and other siteworks.
18. The following documents are submitted in support of the application:
  - Completed application form
  - Planning Supporting Statement (October 2024)
  - Supporting Cover letter (Clanmill Housing Association)
  - Levels and landscaping have been provided on the Existing Site plan (Drg No. 02a uploaded to the planning register 16<sup>th</sup> December 2024).

- Transport Assessment
- Flood Risk Assessment (Flood Risk Consulting, Nov 2024)
- Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (WM Associates 20/11/2024)

### Relevant Planning History

19. The following planning history linked to the site is set out in the table below:

| Reference         | Description of Development   | Location  | Decision                           |
|-------------------|--|---|------------------------------------|
| S/2006/1382/F     | Erection of 24 No. dwellings (8 detached, 4 semi-detached and 12 townhouses) plus carports, garages and associated siteworks.  | Lands adjacent to 9 Moybrick Road, Dromara                            | Permission Granted<br>09/07/2009   |
| S/2010/0997/F     | Residential development for 28 dwellings consisting of detached, semi-detached, townhouses, garages, open space, landscaping and associated site works.                                  | Lands adjacent to 9 Moybrick Road Dromara                             | Permission Granted<br>26/09/2011   |
| LA05/2019/0701/F  | Proposed residential development of 26 dwellings comprising 20 semi-detached and 6 detached houses including garages, open space, landscaping and associated works (amended description) | Land adjacent to 9 Bridge Cottages Moybrick Road Dromara              | Permission Granted<br>12/04/2022   |
| LA05/2025/0029/F  | Erection of 13 dwellings [social/affordable] and associated/ancillary development to include new accesses, roadways, landscaping and other siteworks                                     | Lands adjacent to 9 Bridge Cottages Moybrick Road, Dromara            | Pending                            |
| LA05/2025/0159/DC | Discharge of Conditions 13 and 14 of planning approval LA05/2019/0701/F- Submission of Archaeologists Programme of Works   | Lands adjacent to 9 Bridge Cottages, Moybrick Road, Dromara, BT25 2BT | Condition Discharged<br>10/04/2025 |

|                   |   |   |                                 |
|-------------------|---|---|---------------------------------|
| LA05/2025/0181/DC | Discharge of Condition 10 of LA05/2019/0701/F. A detailed Construction Method Statement for works in, near or liable to affect any waterway as defined by the Water (Northern Ireland) Order 1999, must be submitted to NIEA Water Management Unit, at least 8 weeks prior to commencement of the works or phase of works | Lands adjacent to 9 Bridge Cottages, Moybrick Road, Dromara, BT25 2BT | Condition discharged 04/07/2025 |
| LA05/2025/0486/DC | As submitted - a programme of post excavation archaeological analysis.  | Lands adjacent to 9 Bridge Cottages Moybrick Road, Dromara            | Condition discharged 22/07/2025 |
| LA05/2025/0500/DC | Discharge of condition 18 of planning approval LA05/2019/0701/F Report from Lisbane Consultants - Civil and Traffic Engineers   | Lands adjacent to 9 Bridge Cottages, Dromara, Dromore, BT25 2BT       | Withdrawn 17/09/2025            |

## Consultations

20. The following consultations were carried out:

| Consultee                         | Response     |
|-----------------------------------|--------------|
| DFI Rivers                        | No Objection |
| DFI Roads                         | No Objection |
| Environmental Health              | No Objection |
| NI Water                          | No Objection |
| NIEA Water Management Unit        | No Objection |
| NIEA Natural Environment Division | No Objection |
| Historic Environment Division     | No Objection |

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Representations

21. Two objections are received as follows:

- Moybrick Road cannot facilitate any more housing, the road is too narrow, sewage can't cope, flooding concerns and Dromara cannot cope with any more social housing.
- We are genuinely concerned that the proposed new development is situated on the edge of the River Lagan and feel that this would impact a number of houses that are situated on down the river. As you will be aware there has been ongoing flooding issues in the village over the past few years.
- The current sewerage treatment plant for the village is already over capacity and needs improvement to cope with the existing buildings in the village. No new development should be considered until the existing plant has been improved or replaced.
- As far as we know this is also a flood plain where the site is being considered.
- Flooding in Dromara seems to be an issue that is not being resolved within any government agencies.
- The current local infrastructure including roads, GP surgery and Schools in the area cannot support the additional numbers of people that this development would bring.
- The GP surgery in Dromara is stretched with the number of patients it currently has so an influx of people will mean an even bigger strain on an already overloaded system.
- The local schools in the area would find it hard to accommodate any additional pupils.

Local Development Plan

22. Section 6(4) of the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 requires that in making a determination on planning applications, regard must be had to the requirements of the local development plan and that determination must be in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Plan Strategy 2032

23. It is stated at Part 1 of the Plan Strategy that:

*Transitional arrangements will apply in relation to the existing Plan designations. The existing Development Plans which remain in effect for different parts of the Council area are set out in Chapter 2 (Existing Development Plans). Following adoption the Development Plan will be the Plan Strategy and any old Development Plan, with the Plan Strategy having priority in the event of a conflict. Regulation 1 state that the old Development Plans will cease to have effect on adoption of the new LDP at Local Policies Plan (LPP) stage.*

*The Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan (BMAP) was intended to be the Development Plan on its adoption in September 2014. This Plan was subsequently declared unlawful following a successful legal challenge and therefore remains in its entirety un-adopted. BMAP in its post-inquiry form was at an advanced stage and therefore remains a material consideration. Draft BMAP (November 2004) in its pre-inquiry form also remains a material consideration in conjunction with recommendations of the Planning Appeals Commission Public Local Inquiry Reports.*

24. In accordance with the transitional arrangements, the development plan is the Plan Strategy and the Lisburn Area Plan 2001 (LAP). Draft BMAP remains a material consideration.
25. In the LAP the site, except for a strip adjacent to the River Lagan, is identified as being located in the settlement limit of Dromara. The boundary of the settlement limit remains unchanged in draft BMAP and the post inquiry revision to draft BAMP and is located within housing zoning DA 03/03.
26. It is also noted that the part of the site within the open countryside adjacent to the River Lagan is within the Local Landscape Policy Area, DA 06 in the last revision to draft BMAP.
27. Those features, or the combination of features, that contribute to the environmental quality, integrity or character of this area are listed below:
  - Listed building and its surroundings - St John's Church, built in 1811.
  - Locally significant buildings and their surroundings - A farm dating from 1830, situated on the Banbridge Road, late 19th century mill cottages, and a post war school of high visual quality.
  - Area of local nature conservation interest - The topography of the river corridor, and associated vegetation makes an important contribution to the setting of the town.
28. The proposed development is for new housing in the settlement of Dromara. The strategic policy for Sustainable Development is set out in Part 1 of the Plan Strategy. Strategic Policy 01 - Sustainable Development states that:

*The Plan will support development proposals which further sustainable development including facilitating sustainable housing growth; promoting balanced economic growth; protecting and enhancing the historic and natural environment; mitigating and adapting to climate change and supporting sustainable infrastructure.*

29. The strategic policy for Creating and Enhancing Shared Space and Quality Places is set out in Part 1 of the Plan Strategy. Strategic Policy 03 – Creating and Enhancing Shared Space and Quality Places states that:

*The Plan will support development proposals that contribute to the creation of an environment which is accessible to all and enhances opportunities for shared communities; has a high standard of connectivity and supports shared*

*use of public realm. Good quality housing that supports more balanced communities must offer a variety of house types, sizes and tenures to meet different needs.*

*Creating shared neighbourhoods should provide opportunities for communities to access local employment, shopping, leisure, education and community facilities.*

30. The strategic policy for Good Design and Positive Place Making is set out in Part 1 of the Plan Strategy. Strategic Policy 05 - Good Design and Positive Place Making states that:

*The Plan will support development proposals that incorporate good design and positive place making to further sustainable development, encourage healthier living, promote accessibility and inclusivity and contribute to safety. Good design should respect the character of the area, respect environmental and heritage assets and promote local distinctiveness. Positive place-making should acknowledge the need for quality, place-specific contextual design which promotes accessibility and inclusivity, creating safe, vibrant and adaptable places.*

31. The strategic policy for Protecting and Enhancing the Environment is set out in Part 1 of the Plan Strategy. Strategic Policy 06 - Protecting and Enhancing the Environment states that:

*The Plan will support development proposals that respect the historic and natural environment and biodiversity. Proposals must aim to conserve, protect and where possible enhance the environment, acknowledging the rich variety of assets and associated historic and natural heritage designations. Proposals should respect the careful management, maintenance and enhancement of ecosystem services which form an integral part of sustainable development.*

32. The scheme is comprised of sixteen dwellings which are described as affordable housing. The Strategic Section 76 Agreements is set out in Part 1 of the Plan Strategy. Strategic Policy 07- Section 76 Agreements states that:

*Development will be required to deliver more sustainable communities by providing, or making contributions to, local and regional infrastructure in proportion to its scale, impact of the development and the sustainability of its location. A developer will be expected to provide or contribute to the following infrastructure in order to mitigate any negative consequences of development:*

- a) improvements to the transport network, including walking and cycling routes, public transport or, where necessary appropriate parking provision*
- b) affordable housing*
- c) educational facilities and/or their upgrades*
- d) outdoor recreation*
- e) protection, enhancement and management of the natural and historic environment*
- f) community facilities and/or their upgrades*

- g) *improvements to the public realm*
- h) *service and utilities infrastructure*
- i) *recycling and waste facilities*

33. The strategic policy for Housing in Settlement Limits is set out in Part 1 of the Plan Strategy. Strategic Policy 08 Housing in Settlements states that:

*The Plan will support development proposals that:*

- a) *are in accordance with the Strategic Housing Allocation provided in Table 3*
- b) *facilitate new residential development which respects the surrounding context and promotes high quality design within settlements*
- c) *promote balanced local communities with a mixture of house types of different size and tenure including affordable and specialised housing*
- d) *encourage compact urban forms and appropriate densities while protecting the quality of the urban environment.*

34. The following operational policies in Part 2 of the Plan Strategy also apply.

#### **Housing in Settlements**

35. As this application is for residential development policy HOU1 - New Residential Development states that:

*Planning permission will be granted for new residential development in settlements in the following circumstances:*

- a) *on land zoned for residential use*
- b) *on previously developed land (brownfield sites) or as part of mixed-use development*
- c) *in designated city and town centres, and within settlement development limits of the city, towns, greater urban areas, villages and small settlements*
- d) *living over the shop schemes within designated city and town centres, or as part of mixed use development.*

*The above policy applies to all residential uses as set out in Part C of the Schedule to the Planning (Use Classes) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015 (or as amended).*

36. Policy HOU2- Protection of Land Zoned for Housing states that:

*Planning permission for alternative uses on zoned housing land, where not identified as a Key Site Requirement (KSR), will only be granted in the following circumstances:*

- a) *the proposed use is compatible with the housing zoning, it meets a demonstrable community need and it cannot be provided on a suitable alternative site*

*b) the nature, size and scale of the alternative use is, and will remain, ancillary to the main use of the land for housing*

37. Policy HOU3 - Site Context and Characteristics of New Residential Development states:

*Planning permission will be granted for new residential development where it will create a quality and sustainable residential environment which respects the existing site context and characteristics. An overall design concept, in accordance with Policy HOU6 must be submitted for all residential proposals and must demonstrate that a proposal draws upon the positive aspects of, and respects the local character, appearance and environmental quality of the surrounding area. Proposals for residential development will be expected to conform to all the following criteria:*

- a) the development respects the surrounding context, by creating or enhancing a local identity and distinctiveness that reinforces a sense of place, and is appropriate to the character and topography of the site in terms of layout, scale, proportions, massing and appearance of buildings, structures and landscaped and hard surfaced areas*
- b) archaeological, historic environment and landscape characteristics/features are identified and, where appropriate, protected and suitably integrated into the overall design and layout of the development.*

*For new residential development in areas of distinctive townscape character, including Conservation Areas and Areas of Townscape or Village Character, an increased residential density will only be allowed in exceptional circumstances.*

*All development should be in accordance with available published space standards.*

38. Policy HOU4 - Design in New Residential Development states:

*Proposals for residential development will be expected to conform to all the following design criteria:*

- a) the design of the development must draw upon the best local architectural form, materials and detailing*
- b) landscaped areas using appropriate locally characteristic or indigenous species and private open space must form an integral part of a proposal's open space and where appropriate will be required along site boundaries to soften the visual impact of the development and assist in its integration with the surrounding area*
- c) where identified as a Key Site Requirement adequate provision is made for necessary local community facilities, to be provided by the developer*
- d) residential development should be brought forward in line with the following density bands:*
  - *City Centre Boundary 120-160 dwellings per hectare*

- *Settlement Development Limits of City, Towns and Greater Urban Areas: 25-35 dwellings per hectare*
  - *Settlement Development Limits of Villages and small settlements 20-25 dwellings per hectare.*
  - *Within the above designated areas, increased housing density above the indicated bands will be considered in town centres and those locations that benefit from high accessibility to public transport facilities*
- e) *a range of dwellings should be proposed that are accessible in their design to provide an appropriate standard of access for all. The design of dwellings should ensure they are capable of providing accommodation that is wheelchair accessible for those in society who are mobility impaired. A range of dwelling types and designs should be provided to prevent members of society from becoming socially excluded*
  - f) *dwellings should be designed to be energy and resource efficient and, where practical should include integrated renewable energy technologies to minimise their impact on the environment*
  - g) *a proposed site layout must indicate safe and convenient access through provision of walking and cycling infrastructure, both within the development and linking to existing or planned networks; meet the needs of mobility impaired persons; and respect existing public rights of way*
  - h) *adequate and appropriate provision is made for car and bicycle parking including where possible electric vehicle charging points*
  - i) *the design and layout must not create conflict with adjacent land uses and there is no unacceptable adverse effect on existing or proposed properties in terms of overlooking, loss of light, overshadowing, noise or other disturbance*
  - j) *the design and layout should where possible include use of permeable paving and sustainable drainage*
  - k) *the design and layout design must demonstrate appropriate provision is made for householder waste storage and its collection can be facilitated without impairment to the access and manoeuvrability of waste service vehicles*
  - l) *the development is designed to deter crime and promote personal safety.*
  - m) *any proposal for residential development which fails to produce an appropriate quality of design will not be permitted, even on land identified for residential use in a development plan.*

39. *The Justification and Amplification states that :*

*Please note the Supplementary Planning Guidance on design of residential development that will support the implementation of this policy.*

40. *It also states that:*

#### *Accessible Accommodation*

*Design standards are encouraged to meet the varying needs of occupiers and be easily capable of accommodating adaptations. Developers should ensure that a range of dwelling sizes (including internal layout and the number of*

*bedrooms) is provided to meet a range of housing needs that facilitate integration and the development of mixed communities.*

41. Policy HOU5- Public Open Space in New Residential Development states that:

*Adequate provision must be made for green and blue infrastructure in public open space and for open space that links with green and blue infrastructure where possible and provides pedestrian and cycle linkages to nearby public amenity spaces. Proposals for new residential development of 25 or more units, or on sites of one hectare or more, must provide public open space as an integral part of the development, subject to the following:*

- a) the open space must be at least 10% of the total site area*
- b) for development proposals of 300 or more units, or on sites of 15 hectares or more, the open space must be at least 15% of the total site area.*

*The following exceptions to the above open space provision will apply where:*

- a) the residential development is designed to integrate with and make use of adjoining public open space*
- b) the provision of open space below 10% of the total site area if the proposal is located within a city or town centre or it is demonstrated that it is close to and would benefit from ease of access to existing public open space*
- c) in the case of apartment developments or specialist housing (see Policy HOU11) where a commensurate level of private communal open space is being provided.*

*Development proposals of 100 units or more, or on sites of 5 hectares or more, must be provided with an equipped children's play area unless one already exists within a reasonable and safe walking distance (generally around 400 metres) of the majority of the units within the proposal.*

*Public open space required by this policy will be expected to conform to all of the following criteria:*

- it is designed as an integral part of the development with easy and safe access from the dwellings*
- it is of demonstrable recreational or amenity value*
- it is designed, wherever possible, to be multi-functional*
- its design, location and appearance takes into account the needs of disabled persons and it respects the amenity of nearby residents*
- landscape and heritage features are retained and incorporated in its design and layout. In all cases developers will be responsible for the laying out and landscaping of public open space required under this policy.*

*Developers must demonstrate that suitable arrangements will be put in place for the future management and maintenance in perpetuity of areas of public open space required under this policy.*

42. Policy HOU8 - Protecting Local Character, Environmental Quality and Residential Amenity in Established Residential Areas states:

*Planning permission will be granted for the redevelopment of existing buildings, or the infilling of vacant sites (including extended garden areas) to accommodate new housing, where the criteria set out in Policies HOU3 and HOU4 (with the exception of Policy HOU4(d) – Density Bands), and all the additional criteria set out below are met:*

- a. the proposed density is not significantly higher than that found in the established residential area*
- b. the pattern of development is in keeping with the local character, environmental quality and existing residential amenity of the established residential area*
- c. all dwelling units and apartments are built to a size not less than those set out in Supplementary Planning Guidance, Part A: Space Standards for Dwellings.*

43. Policy HOU10- Affordable Housing in Settlements states:

*Where the need for Affordable Housing is identified, through the Housing Needs Assessment, on sites of more than 0.5 hectares or comprising of 5 residential units or more, proposals will only be permitted where provision is made for a minimum 20% of all units to be affordable. This provision will be secured and agreed through a Section 76 Planning Agreement.*

*All developments incorporating affordable housing should be designed to integrate with the overall scheme with no significant distinguishable design differences, in accordance with any other relevant policies contained within this Plan Strategy.*

*In exceptional circumstances where it is demonstrated that the affordable housing requirement cannot be met, alternative provision must be made by the applicant, or an appropriate financial contribution in lieu must be agreed through a Section 76 Planning Agreement. Such agreements must contribute to the objective of creating mixed and balanced communities.*

*Proposals for the provision of specialist accommodation for a group of people with specific needs (such as purpose-built accommodation for the elderly, Policy HOU11) will not be subject to the requirements of this policy.*

*Windfall sites will be encouraged for the development of affordable housing in suitable and accessible locations.*

*By exception, proposals for affordable housing could be permitted on land identified as open space, in accordance with Policy OS1, where it can be demonstrated that all of the following criteria have been met:*

- a) a demonstrable need has been identified by the Northern Ireland Housing Executive*
- b) the application is made by a registered Housing Association or the Northern Ireland Housing Executive*
- c) the proposal will bring substantial community benefits that decisively outweigh the loss of the open space.*

*Development proposals will not be supported where lands have been artificially divided for the purposes of circumventing this policy requirement.*

44. The Glossary associated with Part 2 of the Plan Strategy states that:

*Affordable Housing – affordable housing is:*

- a) Social rented housing; or*
- b) Intermediate housing for sale; or*
- c) Intermediate housing for rent,*

*that is provided outside of the general market, for those whose needs are not met by the market.*

*Affordable housing which is funded by Government must remain affordable or alternatively there must be provision for the public subsidy to be repaid or recycled in the provision of new affordable housing.*

### **Access, Movement and Parking**

45. A new access is proposed onto the Moybrick Road. Policy TRA1 Creating an Accessible Environment states that:

*The external layout of all development proposals will incorporate, where appropriate:*

- a) facilities to aid accessibility e.g. level access to buildings, provision of dropped kerbs and tactile paving etc, together with the removal of any unnecessary obstructions*
- b) user friendly and convenient movement along pathways and an unhindered approach to buildings*
- c) priority pedestrian and cycling movement within and between land uses*
- d) ease of access to car parking reserved for disabled or other users, public transport facilities and taxi ranks.*

*Public buildings will only be permitted where they are designed to provide suitable access for customers, visitors and employees. Access to existing*

*buildings and their surroundings should be improved as opportunities arise through alterations, extensions and changes of use.*

*Submission of a Transport Assessment Form (TAF) and a Design and Access Statement may also be required to accompanying development proposals.*

46. Policy TRA2 – Access to Public Roads states:

*Planning permission will only be granted for a development proposal involving direct access, or the intensification of the use of an existing access, onto a public road where:*

- a) it will not prejudice road safety or significantly inconvenience the flow of vehicles; and,*
- b) it does not conflict with Policy TRA3 Access to Protected Routes.*

*Consideration will also be given to the nature and scale of the development, character of existing development, the contribution of the proposal to the creation of a quality environment, the location and number of existing accesses and the standard of the existing road network together with the speed and volume of traffic using the adjacent public road and any expected increase.*

47. The justification and amplification states:

*New development will often affect the public road network surrounding it. This policy seeks to avoid or mitigate adverse impacts and ensure that proposed access arrangements are safe and will not unduly interfere with the movement of traffic.*

*Development proposals involving a new access, or the use of an existing access must be in compliance with the requirements of the Department's Development Control Advice Note 15, Vehicle Access Standards (2nd Edition, published in August 1999). For the purposes of this policy, a field gate is not an existing access.*

*The proximity of the proposed access to junctions, other existing accesses and the total number of accesses onto a given stretch of road are relevant matters in the assessment of traffic hazards. The combining of individual access points along a road will be encouraged as this can help to improve road safety.*

*Control over the land required to provide the requisite visibility splays will be required to ensure that they are retained free of any obstruction. This may be subject to a planning condition requiring that no development shall take place until the works required to provide access, including visibility splays, have been carried out.*

48. Parking is required to service the proposed residential development. Policy TRA7- Car Parking and Servicing Arrangements in New Developments states:

*Development proposals will provide adequate provision for car parking and appropriate servicing arrangements. The precise amount of car parking will be*

*determined according to the specific characteristics of the development and its location having regard to published standards or any reduction provided for in an area of parking restraint designated in the Local Development Plan. Proposals should not prejudice road safety or significantly inconvenience the flow of vehicles.*

*Beyond areas of parking restraint a reduced level of car parking provision may be acceptable in the following circumstances:*

- a) where, through a Transport Assessment or accompanying Travel Plan, it forms part of a package of measures to promote alternative transport modes*
- b) where the development is in a highly accessible location well served by public transport*
- c) where the development would benefit from spare capacity available in nearby public car parks or adjacent on street car parking*
- d) where shared car parking is a viable option*
- e) where the exercise of flexibility would assist in the conservation of the historic or natural environment, would aid rural regeneration, facilitate a better quality of development or the beneficial re-use of an existing building.*

*Proposals involving car parking in excess of the Department's published standards will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances, subject to the submission of a Transport Assessment outlining alternatives.*

*A proportion of the spaces to be provided will be reserved for people with disabilities.*

*Car parking proposals should include an appropriate number of reserved electric charging point spaces and their associated equipment.*

*Where a reduced level of car parking provision is applied or accepted, this will not normally apply to the number of reserved spaces to be provided.*

### **Waste Management**

49. The proposed development is to be connected to the main sewer. Policy WM2 - Treatment of Wastewater states:

*Development proposals to provide mains sewage Wastewater Treatment Works (WwTWs) will be permitted where it is demonstrated to the Council there is a need for new or extended capacity requirements and the new facilities comply with the requirements of Policy WM1.*

*Development relying on non mains sewage treatment will only be permitted where it is demonstrated to the Council and its statutory consultees that there is sufficient capacity to discharge treated effluent to a watercourse and that this will not create or add to a pollution problem or create or add to flood risk.*

### **Flooding**

50. The site is adjacent to the River Lagan and part of the site is in the floodplain. Policy FLD1- Development in Fluvial (River) Flood Plains states that:

*New development will not be permitted within the 1 in 100 year fluvial flood plain (AEP of 1%) plus the latest mapped climate change allowance, unless the applicant can demonstrate that the proposal constitutes an exception to the policy in the following cases:*

*Exceptions in Defended Areas*

*On previously developed land protected by flood defences (confirmed by DfI Rivers as structurally adequate) in a 1 in 100 year plus climate change allowance fluvial flood event.*

*Proposals that fall into any of the following categories will not be permitted by this exception:*

- a) *essential infrastructure such as power supply and emergency services*
- b) *development for the storage of hazardous substances*
- c) *bespoke development for vulnerable groups, such as schools, residential/nursing homes, sheltered housing*
- d) *any development located close to flood defences.*

*Proposals involving significant intensification of use will be considered on their individual merits and will be informed by a Flood Risk Assessment.*

*Exceptions in Undefended Areas*

*The following categories of development will be permitted by exception:*

- a) *replacement of an existing building*
- b) *development for agricultural use, transport and utilities infrastructure, which for operational reasons has to be located within the flood plain*
- c) *water compatible development, such as for boating purposes, navigation and water based recreational use, which for operational reasons has to be located in the flood plain*
- d) *the use of land for sport or outdoor recreation, amenity open space or for nature conservation purposes, including ancillary buildings. This exception does not include playgrounds for children*
- e) *the extraction of mineral deposits and necessary ancillary development.*

*Proposals that fall into any of the following categories will not be permitted by this exception:*

- a) *bespoke development for vulnerable groups, such as schools, residential/nursing homes, sheltered housing*
- b) *essential infrastructure*
- c) *development for the storage of hazardous substances.*

### *Development Proposals of Overriding Regional or Sub-Regional Economic Importance*

*A development proposal within the flood plain that does not constitute an exception to the policy may be permitted where it is deemed to be of overriding regional or sub-regional economic importance and meets both of the following criteria:*

- a) demonstration of exceptional benefit to the regional or sub-regional economy*
- b) demonstration that the proposal requires a location within the flood plain and justification of why possible alternative sites outside the flood plain are unsuitable.*

*Where the principle of development is established through meeting the above criteria, the Council will steer the development to those sites at lowest flood risk.*

### *Minor Development*

*Minor development will be acceptable within defended and undefended flood plains subject to a satisfactory flood risk assessment.<sup>42</sup> Where the principle of development is accepted by the Council through meeting any of the above 'Exceptions Tests', the applicant is required to submit a Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) to demonstrate that all sources of flood risk to and from the proposed development have been identified; and there are adequate measures to manage and mitigate any increase in flood risk arising from the development. Flood Protection/Management Measures In flood plains the following flood protection and management measures proposed as part of a planning application, unless carried out by DfI Rivers or other statutory body, will not be acceptable: a) new hard engineered or earthen bank flood defences b) flood compensation storage works c) land raising (infilling) to elevate a site above the flood level within the undefended fluvial flood plain*

51. Policy FLD2 Protection of Flood Defence and Drainage Infrastructure states:

*Development will not be permitted that impedes the operational effectiveness of flood defence and drainage infrastructure or hinder access for maintenance, including building over the line of a culvert.*

52. A drainage assessment is required given the scale of proposed development. Policy FLD3- Development and Surface Water (Pluvial) Flood Risk Outside Flood Plains states:

*A Drainage Assessment (DA) will be required for development proposals that exceed any of the following thresholds:*

- a. a residential development of 10 or more units*
- b. a development site in excess of 1 hectare*
- c. a change of use involving new buildings and/or hard surfacing exceeding 1,000 square metres in area.*

*A DA will also be required for any development proposal, except for minor development where:*

- *it is located in an area where there is evidence of historical flooding*
- *surface water run-off from the development may adversely impact on other development or features of importance to nature conservation, archaeology or historic environment features.*

*A development requiring a DA will be permitted where it is demonstrated through the DA that adequate measures will be put in place so as to effectively mitigate the flood risk to the proposed development and from the development elsewhere. If a DA is not required, but there is potential for surface water flooding as shown on the surface water layout of DfI Flood Maps NI, it remains the responsibility of the developer to mitigate the effects of flooding and drainage as a result of the development.*

*Where the proposed development is also located within a fluvial flood plain, then Policy FLD1 will take precedence.*

### 53. Policy FLD5 Development in Proximity to Reservoirs states:

*New development will only be permitted within the potential flood inundation area of a 'controlled reservoir' as shown on DfI Flood Maps NI if:*

- a) it can be demonstrated that the condition, management and maintenance regime of the reservoir is appropriate to provide sufficient assurance regarding reservoir safety, so as to enable the development to proceed; or*
- b) where assurance on the condition, management and maintenance regime of the relevant reservoir(s) is not demonstrated, the application is accompanied by a Flood Risk Assessment, or other analysis, which assesses the downstream flood risk in the event of an uncontrolled release of water due to reservoir failure as being acceptable to enable the development to proceed.*

*There will be a presumption against development within the potential flood inundation area for proposals that include:*

- *Essential infrastructure;*
- *Storage of hazardous substances; and*
- *Bespoke accommodation for vulnerable groups.*

*Replacement Building(s): where assurance on the condition, management and maintenance of the relevant reservoir(s) is not demonstrated, planning approval will be granted for the replacement of an existing building(s) within the potential flood inundation area of a controlled reservoir provided it is demonstrated that there is no material increase in the flood risk to the proposed development or elsewhere.*

### **Renewable Energy**

### 54. The new dwellings should integrate renewable energy technology. Policy RE2 Integrated Renewable Energy states:

*Planning permission will be granted for a development proposal which integrates renewable energy technology including microgeneration and passive solar design (PSD) in its layout, siting and design, where it meets the provisions of Policy RE1 and provided the technology is appropriate to the location in terms of any visual or amenity impact it may have.*

### **Historic Environment and Archaeology**

55. There is a rich archaeology associated with this settlement on the River Lagan. Policy HE2 The Preservation of Archaeological Remains of Local Importance and their Settings states that:

*Proposals which would adversely affect archaeological sites or monuments which are of local importance or their settings shall only be permitted where the Council considers that the need for the proposed development or other material considerations outweigh the value of the remains and/or their settings.*

56. Policy HE3 Archaeological Assessment and Evaluation states that:

*Where the impact of a development proposal on important archaeological remains is unclear, or the relative importance of such remains is uncertain, the Council will require developers to provide further information in the form of an archaeological assessment or an archaeological evaluation. Where such information is requested but not made available the Council will refuse planning permission.*

57. Policy HE4 Archaeological Mitigation states that:

*Where the Council is minded to grant planning permission for development which will affect sites known or likely to contain archaeological remains, the Council will impose planning conditions to ensure that appropriate measures are taken for the identification and mitigation of the archaeological impacts of the development, including where appropriate completion of a licensed excavation and recording examination and archiving of remains before development commences or the preservation of remains in situ.*

58. Policy HE9- Development Affecting the Setting of a Listed Building states that:

*Proposals which would adversely affect the setting of a listed building will not be permitted. Development proposals will normally only be considered appropriate where all the following criteria are met:*

- a) the detailed design respects the listed building in terms of scale, height, massing and alignment*
- b) the works and architectural details should use quality materials and techniques (traditional and/or sympathetic) in keeping with the listed building*
- c) the nature of the use proposed respects the character of the setting of the building.*

### **Natural Heritage**

59. The site is adjacent to the River Lagan which is hydrologically connected to designated sites in Belfast Lough. Policy NH1- European and Ramsar Sites- International states:

*Planning permission will only be granted for a development proposal that, either individually or in combination with existing and/or proposed plans or projects, is not likely to have a significant effect on:*

- a) *a European Site (Special Protection Area, proposed Special Protection Area, Special Areas of Conservation, candidate Special Areas of Conservation and Sites of Community Importance)*
- b) *a listed or proposed Ramsar Site.*

*Where a development proposal is likely to have a significant effect (either alone or in combination) or reasonable scientific doubt remains, the Council, through consultation with the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA), is required by law to carry out an appropriate assessment of the implications for the site in view of the site's conservation objectives. Only after having ascertained that it will not adversely affect the integrity of the site, can the Council agree to the development and impose appropriate mitigation measures in the form of planning conditions.*

*In exceptional circumstances, a development proposal which could adversely affect the integrity of a European or Ramsar Site may only be permitted where:*

- i. there are no alternative solutions; and*
- ii. the proposed development is required for imperative reasons of overriding public interest; and*
- iii. compensatory measures are agreed and fully secured.*

*As part of the consideration of exceptional circumstances, where a European or a listed or proposed Ramsar site hosts a priority habitat or priority species listed in Annex I or II of the Habitats Directive, a development proposal will only be permitted when:*

- a) it is necessary for reasons of human health or public safety or there is a beneficial consequence of primary importance to the environment; or*
- b) agreed in advance with the European Commission.*

60. The site is large and adjacent to a large watercourse. Policy NH2- Species Protected by Law states that:

*European Protected Species Planning permission will only be granted for a development proposal that is not likely to harm a European protected species.*

*In exceptional circumstances a development proposal that is likely to harm these species may only be permitted where:*

- a) *there are no alternative solutions; and*
- b) *it is required for imperative reasons of overriding public interest; and*
- c) *there is no detriment to the maintenance of the population of the species at a favourable conservation status; and*
- d) *compensatory measures are agreed and fully secured.*

#### *National Protected Species*

*Planning permission will only be granted for a development proposal that is not likely to harm any other statutorily protected species and which can be adequately mitigated or compensated against.*

*Development proposals are required to be sensitive to all protected species, and sited and designed to protect them, their habitats and prevent deterioration and destruction of their breeding sites or resting places. Seasonal factors will also be taken into account.*

#### 61. Policy NH3- Sites of Nature Conservation Importance- National states:

*Planning permission will only be granted for a development proposal that is not likely to have an adverse effect on the integrity, including the value of the site to the habitat network, or special interest of:*

- a) *an Area of Special Scientific Interest*
- b) *a National Nature Reserve*
- c) *a Nature Reserve*
- d) *a Marine Conservation Zone.*

*A development proposal which could adversely affect a site of national importance may only be permitted where the benefits of the proposed development clearly outweigh the value of the site.*

*In such cases, appropriate mitigation and/or compensatory measures will be required.*

#### 62. Policy NH4- Sites of Nature Conservation Importance- Local states:

*Planning permission will only be granted for a development proposal that is not likely to have a significant adverse impact on:*

- a) *a Local Nature Reserve*
- b) *a Wildlife Refuge.*

*A development proposal which could have a significant adverse impact on a site of local importance may only be permitted where the benefits of the proposed development outweigh the value of the site.*

*In such cases, appropriate mitigation and/or compensatory measures will be required.*

63. Policy NH5-Habitats, Species or Features of Natural Heritage Importance states:

*Planning permission will only be granted for a development proposal which is not likely to result in the unacceptable adverse impact on, or damage to known:*

- a) *priority habitats*
- b) *priority species*
- c) *active peatland*
- d) *ancient and long-established woodland*
- e) *features of earth science conservation importance*
- f) *features of the landscape which are of major importance for wild flora and fauna*
- g) *rare or threatened native species*
- h) *wetlands (includes river corridors)*
- i) *other natural heritage features worthy of protection including trees and woodland*

*A development proposal which is likely to result in an unacceptable adverse impact on, or damage to, habitats, species or features listed above may only be permitted where the benefits of the proposed development outweigh the value of the habitat, species or feature.*

*In such cases, appropriate mitigation and/or compensatory measures will be required.*

## Regional Policy and Guidance

### Regional Policy

64. The SPPS Edition 2 was published in December 2025. It is stated at paragraph 1.5 that:

*The provisions of the SPPS apply to the whole of Northern Ireland. They must be taken into account in the preparation of Local Development Plans (LDP) and are material to all decisions on individual planning applications and appeals. The Department intends to undertake a review of the SPPS within 5 years.*

65. Paragraph 2.1 of the SPPS recognises that an objective of the planning system is to secure the orderly and consistent development of land whilst furthering sustainable development and improving well-being. It states that:

*...the planning system should positively and proactively facilitate development that contributes to a more socially economically and environmentally sustainable Northern Ireland. Planning authorities should therefore simultaneously pursue social and economic priorities alongside the careful*

*management of our built and natural environments for the overall benefit of our society*

66. Paragraph 3.6 of the SPPS states:

*...planning authorities should make efficient use of existing capacities of land, buildings and infrastructure, including support for town centre and regeneration priorities in order to achieve sustainable communities where people want to live, work and play now and into the future. Identifying previously developed land within settlements including sites which may have environmental constraints (e.g. land contamination), can assist with the return to productive use of vacant or underused land. This can help deliver more attractive environments, assist with economic regeneration and renewal, and reduce the need for green field development.*

67. Paragraph 3.8 of the SPPS states:

*that the guiding principle for planning authorities in determining planning applications is that sustainable development should be permitted, having regard to the development plan and all other material considerations, unless the proposed development will cause demonstrable harm to interests of acknowledged importance*

68. In practice this means that development which accords with an up-to-date development plan should be approved and proposed development that conflicts with an up-to-date development plan should be refused, unless other material considerations indicate otherwise.

69. The site is proposed to be developed for 16no. dwellings. It is stated at paragraph 6.136 that:

*The policy approach must be to facilitate an adequate and available supply of quality housing to meet the needs of everyone; promote more sustainable housing development within existing urban areas; and the provision of mixed housing development with homes in a range of sizes and tenures. This approach to housing will support the need to maximise the use of existing infrastructure and services, and the creation of more balanced sustainable communities.*

70. Further to this, paragraph 6.232 states that:

*In plan-making and decision-taking, planning authorities should encourage and support the appropriate use of micro-generation energy, including the retrofitting of renewable and low carbon energy technologies.*

71. There are no implications for this proposal following the publication of the SPPS Edition 2, only paragraph 6.232 is new and the need for integrated renewable energy was taken account of in the preparation of policy within the LDP Plan Strategy. Requirements of policy RE2 are considered later in the report.

Retained Regional Guidance

72. Whilst not policy, the following guidance documents remain a material consideration:

Creating Places

73. The policy requires the guidance in the Creating Places - Achieving Quality in Residential Developments' (May 2000) to also be considered.

The guide is structured around the process of design and addresses the following matters:

- *the analysis of a site and its context;*
- *strategies for the overall design character of a proposal;*
- *the main elements of good design; and*
- *detailed design requirements.*

74. Paragraph 7.16 provides guidance on separation distances stating:

*Where the development abuts the private garden areas of existing properties, a separation distance greater than 20 metres will generally be appropriate to minimise overlooking, with a minimum of around 10 meters between the rear of new houses and the common boundary.*

75. Paragraphs 5.19 - 5.20 provides guidance on the level of private open space provision as follows:

*Provision should be calculated as an average space standard for the development as a whole and should be around 70 square metres per house or greater. Garden sizes larger than the average will generally suit dwellings for use by families. An area less than around 40 square metres will generally be unacceptable.*

Development Control Advice Note 8 - Housing in Existing Urban Areas

76. Paragraph 4.10 states that the Council:

*will expect applicants and designers to carry out an appraisal of the local context, which takes into account the character of the surrounding area; and new development should respect the architectural, streetscape and landscape character of the area.*

Development Control Advice Note 15 - Vehicular Access Standards

77. The purpose of this Advice Note is to give general guidance to intending developers, their professional advisors and agents on the standards for vehicular access.

## Assessment

### Housing in Settlements

#### Policy HOU 1 - New Residential Development

78. This application is for 16no. residential units. All the built development is on land located within the settlement limits of Dromara that is zoned for housing and the requirements of Policy HOU1 are considered to be met.

#### Policy HOU3 - Site Context and Characteristics of New Residential Development

79. The lands are located in an area of medium-density housing, within the settlement limits of Dromara. The development to the north and south along Moybrick Road is typically characterised by relatively small to medium, semi-detached and terrace dwellings, set in relatively small plots.
80. The dwellings are a mix of single storey, 1.5 storey, and two storeys. They are of differing styles, with some older in design and style than others. It is noted that all are set back from the main road, with either parking or a garden area to the front.

#### House types

##### **House Type A- 3-person 2 bed.**

81. The proposed development will include 4no. Type A dwellings. 3no. Semi-detached and 1no. detached. This house type is two storeys in height and will contain a kitchen/living, store and bathroom at ground floor level. The dwelling will contain 2 no. bedrooms and bathroom at first floor level. The dwelling will have a porch area to the front elevation.
82. House Type A will encompass a total gross floor area of approximately 75sqm.

##### **House Type A(i)- 3-person 2 bed.**

83. The proposed development will include 3no Semi-detached Type A (i) dwellings. This house type is two storeys in height and will contain a kitchen/living, store and bathroom at ground floor level. The dwelling will contain 2 no. bedrooms and bathroom at first floor level. The dwelling will have a porch area to the front elevation.
84. House Type A (i) will encompass a total gross floor area of approximately 75sqm.

##### **House Tye B- 5-person 3 bed.**

85. The proposed development will include 6no Semi-detached Type B dwellings. This house type is two storeys in height and will contain a kitchen/dining, living room, store and bathroom at ground floor level. The dwelling will contain 3no. bedrooms and bathroom at first floor level.
86. House Type B will encompass a total gross floor area of approximately 94.7sqm.

#### **House Type C- 6-person 4 bed**

87. The proposed development will include 3no Type C dwellings, 1no detached and 2no. Semi-detached. This house type is two storeys in height and will contain a kitchen/dining, living room, store and bathroom at ground floor level. The dwelling will contain 4 bedrooms and bathroom at first floor level.
88. House Type C will encompass a total gross floor area of approximately 103sqm.
89. With all dwelling proposed, the window openings are of vertical emphasis, and it is contended that there is an appropriate solid to void ratio to the front façade. All dwellings will consist of a traditional gable end pitched form.
90. Material finishes include red brick with buff coloured brick soldier course above openings. PVC double glazed windows and doors. Roof covering to be flat profile black or dark grey tile.
91. Each dwelling will be fitted with in-roof PV panel system.
92. The proposed dwellings will benefit from private amenity space measuring a minimum of 45sqm to 160sqm.
93. The proposed units will avail of 2no. private car parking spaces to the side of the dwellings and 4no. will access directly via Moybrick Road.
94. The form and general arrangement of the buildings is considered to be characteristic of those in the built surrounding environment, to the east and south of the site.
95. The plot sizes and general layout proposed is consistent with and comparable with other built development in the general vicinity of the site. The dwellings respect the prevailing building lines, whilst retaining gardens to the front which are characteristic of this area, mimicking the existing plot patterns.
96. The separation distances, orientations and landscaping details (as indicated on Plans 11b and 08 respectively) between the existing and proposed development is considered to be acceptable and would minimise any overlooking and dominance or overbearing and no loss of light would be caused.

97. The design of the proposed dwellings has been assessed against Creating Places guidance and is contended to be acceptable. The design of the proposed dwellings has also been considered against the existing pattern of development and is considered to be acceptable in the context of the surrounding area.
98. Based on a review of the information provided, it is considered that the established residential character of the area would not be significantly changed by the proposal.
99. Having regard to this detail and the relationship between the buildings in each plot, it is considered that the proposal is in line with the guidance recommended in the Creating Place document.
100. The site is not in close proximity to any listed buildings.
101. The application site is in proximity to the medieval parish Church of Drumberra, which lies just west of the historic core of the 17th century settlement of Dromara and is adjacent to a historic crossing point of the Lagan. The site also contains the mill race for a corn mill which is recorded in the Industrial Heritage Record (IHR 03176). The recorded archaeological sites and monuments nearby are indicators of a high archaeological potential for further, previously unrecorded archaeological remains.
102. Furthermore, there are no other landscape characteristics/features that identified integration into the overall design and layout of the development.
103. It is concluded that the proposed development is respectful of the residential character, enhances a local identity and distinctiveness that reinforces a sense of place and is appropriate to the character and topography of the site with regards to layout, scale, massing and appearance of buildings and landscaping. Therefore, it is considered that the proposal will comply with criteria a) of policy HOU3.
104. Furthermore, it is concluded that any archaeological, historic and landscape characteristics are suitable integrated and protected into the overall design and layout of the proposed. It is therefore considered that the proposal will comply with criteria b) of HOU3.

#### Policy HOU4 - Design in New Residential Development

105. A range of house types of different sizes are proposed:
  - 4no House Type A- 3-person 2 bed (3no. Semi-detached and 1no. detached). House Type A will encompass a total gross floor area of approximately 75sqm.
  - 3no. House Type A(i)- 3-person 2 bed (Semi-detached). House Type A (i) will encompass a total gross floor area of approximately 75sqm.

- 6no. House Type B- 5-person 3 bed (semi-detached). House Type B will encompass a total gross floor area of approximately 94.7sqm.
  - 3no. House Type C- 6-person 4 bed (1no detached and 2no. Semi-detached). House Type C will encompass a total gross floor area of approximately 103sqm.
106. Material finishes include red brick with buff coloured brick soldier course above openings. PVC double glazed windows and doors. Roof covering to be flat profile black or dark grey tile which is consistent with the materials used in houses adjacent to and opposite the site.
107. Each dwelling will be fitted with in-roof PV solar panel system.
108. The proposed finishes are deemed acceptable and are considered to draw upon the materials and detailing exhibited within the surrounding area and will ensure that the units are as energy efficient as possible. It is considered that criteria (a) and (f) are satisfied
109. The proposed dwellings will benefit from private amenity space provision for each site as follows:
- Site 1-House Type A- 67sqm
  - Site 2-House Type A(i)- 114sqm
  - Site 3-House Type B- 67sqm
  - Site 4- House Type B-67sqm
  - Site 5-House Type B- 67sqm
  - Site 6-House Type B- 67sqm
  - Site 7-House Type A-77sqm
  - Site 8- House Type A (i)- 77sqm
  - Site 9- House Type A- 114sqm
  - Site 10- House Type C- 131sqm
  - Site 11-House Type C- 112sqm
  - Site 12- House Type C- 78sqm
  - Site 13- House Type B- 72sqm
  - Site 14- House Type B- 45sqm
  - Site 15-House Type A-73sqm
  - Site 16- House Type A (i)- 160sqm
110. The proposed units will avail of two. private car parking spaces to the side of the dwellings and 4no. will access directly via Moybrick Road.
111. The amenity space provision is considered to be acceptable as the proposed scheme includes public access to surrounding open amenity space in excess of approximately 7700sqm.
112. The proposed amenity space provisions therefore exceed the recommended amount as set out in supplementary planning guidance Creating Places. Sufficient useable space is provided as well as space for domestic use including bin storage with access to the road via the side driveway for bin collections. It is considered that criteria (k) is met.

113. The proposed design, landscaping and layouts of each proposed house are considered to be in keeping with proposed and existing development thus acceptable at this location within existing urban context.
114. As illustrated on the submitted site plan (01b), the development on the site does not conflict with surrounding land uses. It is suitably separated from surrounding residential development to the northeast and is situated at a lower ground level than adjacent residential dwellings. The dwellings are not considered to be dominant or overbearing and no loss of light would be caused.
115. The submitted topography plan (Drawing no.13) illustrates that the proposed development will sit lower than neighbouring properties to the northeast along Moybrick Road.
116. Boundary details have been provided via landscaping plan (drawing 11b) detailing the following:

*Rear and separating fencing to all housing to be timber post and rail boarding or 15mm thick solid not less than 1800mm above finished ground level. Boarding to be vertical double boarded to prevent step up points for climbing.*

*Proposed hedgerows to be made up of predominantly Hawthorn [Crataegus monogyna], up to 70% with remaining 30% balance of species coming from three of the following thorn planting to 'field side' of perimeter fencing to give an additional layer of security - blackthorn, whitethorn, common holly, dog rose, firethorn or Japanese barberry and to be planted in random order.*

117. Separation distances of approximately 25.8m from proposed site 16 dwelling to nearest neighbouring property No. 9 Bridge Cottages (building to building). In addition. No windows have been proposed at first floor level facing this neighbouring property.
118. In addition, no representations have been received from no. 9 Bridge Cottages.
119. Furthermore, the proposed sites 1, 2, 15 & 16 will maintain minimum separation distances of approximately 27.5 metres from adjacent properties at Moybrick Grove.
120. The proposed the orientation of the dwellings to one another will ensure that the proposal will not result in overlooking to an unacceptable degree to the prospective residents of each proposed site.
121. The layout of the rooms in each of the units, the position of the windows along with the separation distance also ensures that there is no potential overlooking into the private amenity space of neighbouring properties.
122. In addition, Environmental Health were consulted and offered no objections to the proposal subject to conditions.

123. The proposed site layout is not considered to be at odds with that exhibited in the surrounding area. Plan 01b site layout illustrates the site will include additional proposed landscaping to soften visual impression of development. 4no. proposed dwellings front onto the Moybrick Road and benefit from generous garden areas and offer in curtilage parking spaces for each individual dwelling.
124. The proposed garden areas are presented to the front of proposed dwellings ensuring that frontages are not dominated by hardstanding/car parking. As such, it is considered that the proposal will provide suitable drainage.
125. Furthermore, DfI Roads have been consulted and offer no objection to the proposed development in relation to the access arrangements and driveway layouts. It is therefore considered that the proposal will provide appropriate parking provisions and safe convenient access throughout the site for all road users.
126. For the reasons as outlined above, it is therefore considered that criteria b), g), i), j) and l) have been met.
127. The proposed site layout plan and floor plans indicate accessible design adaptations, capable of providing accommodation for wheelchair users and mobility impaired individuals. The design of the dwellings will therefore promote integration and the development of mixed communities. It is therefore considered that criteria e) has been met.
128. No provisions are required for necessary local community facilities. However, the proposal has included a public access gate to the surrounding open space. It is therefore considered that the proposal meets criteria c).
129. The proposed density is not significantly higher than that found in the surrounding residential areas and the proposed pattern of development is considered to be in keeping with the overall character and environmental quality of the surrounding residential areas. The average unit size exceeds space standards set out in supplementary planning guidance. The proposal satisfies criteria (d).
130. For the reasons outlined above, it is accepted that the development complies with the policy tests associated with Policy HOU4 of the Plan Strategy.

#### Policy HOU5 – Public Open Space in New Residential Development

131. The scale of development proposed means that public open space is not required albeit amenity is provided along the edge of the River Lagan by including a pedestrian access gate to the northwest boundary. For this reason the requirements of policy HOU5 are met.
132. The proposal will allow for access to high quality open space in excess of approximately 7000sqm along the River Lagan.

Policy HOU8- Protecting Local Character, Environmental Quality and Residential Amenity in Established Residential Areas

133. The proposed scale, sitting and design of each proposed house are considered to be in keeping with proposed and existing development thus acceptable at this location within existing urban context.
134. It is considered that the proposed density of the proposal is not significantly higher than that found in the surrounding residential developments.
135. As illustrated on the submitted site plan (01b), the development is suitably separated from surrounding residential development to the northeast and is situated at a lower ground level than adjacent residential dwellings. The dwellings are not considered to be dominant or overbearing and no loss of light would be caused.
136. The submitted topography plan (Drawing no.13) illustrates that the proposed development will sit lower than neighbouring properties to the northeast along Moybrick Road.
137. Boundary details have been provided via landscaping plan (drawing 11b) detailing the following:  
  

*Rear and separating fencing to all housing to be timber post and rail boarding or 15mm thick solid not less than 1800mm above finished ground level. Boarding to be vertical double boarded to prevent step up points for climbing.*

*Proposed hedgerows to be made up of predominantly Hawthorn [Crataegus monogyna], up to 70% with remaining 30% balance of species coming from three of the following thorn planting to 'field side' of perimeter fencing to give an additional layer of security - blackthorn, whitethorn, common holly, dog rose, firethorn or Japanese barberry and to be planted in random order.*
138. There will be separation distances of approximately 25.8m from the proposed dwelling at site 16 to the nearest neighbouring property at No. 9 Bridge Cottages (building to building). In addition no windows have been proposed at first floor level facing this neighbouring property.
139. Furthermore, the proposed sites 1, 2, 15 & 16 will maintain minimum separation distances of approximately 27.5 metres from adjacent properties at Moybrick Grove.
140. The proposed orientation of the dwellings to one another will ensure that the proposal will not result in overlooking to an unacceptable degree to the prospective residents of each proposed site.

141. The layout of the rooms in each of the units, the position of the windows along with the separation distance also ensures that there is no potential overlooking into the private amenity space of neighbouring properties.
142. Having reviewed the Space Standards for Dwellings as set out in Supplementary Planning Guidance- Part A, the proposed dwellings will adequately meet minimum space requirements.
143. Taking the above into consideration, officers are satisfied the proposed development will comply with criteria as set out in Policy HOU8.

#### Policy HOU10- Affordable Housing in Settlements

144. Policy HOU10 requires a 20% affordable housing provision. This scheme offers 100% social housing through a design and building contract with Clanmil Housing Association. This policy also states in the justification and amplification that affordable housing should be delivered through mixed tenure developments.
145. It is noted that the proposed scheme does not offer mixed tenure in accordance with the justification and Amplification section of policy HOU4, however the scheme is supported by the Northern Ireland Housing Executive.
146. A supporting statement was provided by the agent who clarified that Clanmil Housing Association intends to purchase the site subject to planning. It is further noted that another scheme adjacent to the site by the same developer remains under consideration and that the requirements of policy HOU10 can still be met for mixed tenure development. For this reason whilst the policy objective as highlighted in the justification and amplification is not met this scheme can be delivered as an affordable only proposal.
147. Notwithstanding this, a Section 76 Agreement is still required to ensure delivery of these units as per the planning approval. It is recommended that no dwelling is occupied until all the units are constructed and available for occupation as affordable housing.
148. The affordable housing tests associated with Policy HOU10 of the Plan Strategy are therefore capable of being met subject to this provision being secured and agreed through a Section 76 Planning Agreement.

### **Access and Transport**

#### Policy TRA1 – Creating an Accessible Environment

149. Detail associated with the P1 Form indicates that the development involves the construction of a new access to a public road for both vehicular and pedestrian use.

150. Based on a review of the detail submitted with the application and advice from DfI Roads it is considered that the proposed complies with Policy TRA1 of the Plan Strategy in that the detail demonstrates that an accessible and safe environment will be created through the provision of footways and dropped kerbs.

#### Policy TRA2 – Access to Public Roads

151. It is also considered that the development complies with Policy TRA2 of the Plan Strategy in that the detail submitted demonstrates that the proposed new access for 16 new dwellings will not prejudice road safety or significantly inconvenience the flow of traffic.
152. The proposal involves accessing the Moybrick Road, which is not a Protected Route. A Transport Assessment Form (TAF) is submitted in support of the application. It provides detail of Travel Characteristics, Transport Impacts and Measures to mitigate impacts/influence travel to the site.
153. The detail contained within the TAF illustrates that the proposed site access can accommodate the proposed traffic movements associated with the development proposals.
154. It is also stated that given the location is accessible by public transport and local amenities are available within walking distance from the site.
155. Regard is also had to the nature and scale of the development, the character of the existing development, the location and number of existing accesses and the standard of the existing road network.
156. Advice received from DfI Roads confirms that they have no objection to the proposal.

#### Policy TRA7 – Carparking and servicing arrangements in new developments

157. The proposal is required to provide 39 parking spaces to fully comply with parking standards. The proposed site layout will include 40 parking spaces, and this has been deemed acceptable for the reasons outlined below.
158. The proposal therefore provides in excess of the required provisions.
159. The site layout depicts that there is adequate space available to accommodate bicycle storage for occupants or those visiting.
160. The site layout depicts that each dwelling has space available to accommodate parking for people with disabilities.
161. The agent has provided additional supporting information confirming the site is highly accessible and well served by public transport routes. In addition to electrical charging points available within the village of Dromara, a short distance from the development.

162. The internal design has allowed adequate turning space for those using the site so as ensure safe use of the site and access to it.

## **Waste Management**

### Policy WM2- Treatment of Waste Water

163. Detail provided on the application form denotes that surface water is to be disposed of via existing water course.
164. Foul sewage will be disposed of via a mains sewer.
165. NIEA Water Management Unit initially responded the following;

*Water Management Unit has considered the impacts of the proposal on the water environment and would advise the proposal has the potential to adversely affect the surface water environment.*

*Water Management Unit is concerned that the sewage loading associated with the above proposal has the potential to cause an environmental impact if transferred to Dromora Waste Water Treatment Works (WWTW). Water Management Unit would therefore recommend that the NIPP Case Officer consult with Northern Ireland Water Limited (NIW) to determine if both the WWTW and associated sewer network will be able to cope with the additional load or whether they would need to be upgraded.*

*If NIW indicate that it can accept the additional load associated with this development, the Water Management Unit would have no objection to this aspect of the proposal.*

166. Environmental Health and NI Water were consulted and offer no objections in principle subject to relevant conditions.
167. Consideration of flood risk is included as a criterion for assessment in policy WM2 which will be considered below.
168. The proposed development is deemed to be in accordance with policy WM2 - Waste Management.

## **Flooding and Drainage**

169. The Flood Maps (NI) indicates that portions of the site lie within the 1 in 100-year fluvial flood plain including the most up to date allowance for climate change.
170. A Flood Risk Assessment was submitted in support of the application. Following consultation with DfI Rivers with these documents, with regards to Policy FLD1 DfI Rivers stated the following;

*The submitted Site plan with levels, Drawing No WW2305 CEMP, indicates that the built development, including gardens, is taking place on elevated ground and out of the floodplain with a suitable freeboard. As such FLD 1 is satisfied.*

171. There is a watercourse which is designated, under the terms of the Drainage (Northern Ireland) Order 1973 and known to Rivers Directorate as the 'River Lagan Extension' located adjacent to the northern boundary of the site

172. With regards to Policy FLD2, DFI Rivers have provided the following response:

*It is essential that a working strip of minimum width 5m from the top of the bank is retained but up to 10m where considered necessary.*

*The applicant should contact the local Rivers Directorate area staff to establish their needs. Rivers Directorate requires that the working strip is shown on a site layout drawing that will be included in any Planning Decision Notice to enable enforcement of the provision of the working strip. Rivers Directorate requests that the working strip is protected from impediment (including tree planting, hedges, permanent fencing and sheds), land raising or any future development by way of a planning condition. Access to and from the maintenance strip should be available at all times*

*Rivers Directorate notes that Drawing No. WW2305 CEMP appears to comply with this requirement.*

173. With regards to Policy FLD3, DFI Rivers provide the following response:

*Rivers Directorate, while not being responsible for the preparation of the Drainage Assessment, accepts its logic and has no reason to disagree with its conclusions.*

*The Drainage Assessment has demonstrated that the design and construction of a suitable drainage network is feasible. It indicates that the 1 in 100 year event including an allowance for climate change and urban creep could be contained within the attenuation system, when discharging at existing green field runoff rate, and therefore there will be no exceedance flows during this event. Further assessment of the drainage network will be made by NI Water prior to adoption.*

174. With regards to Policy FLD5, DFI Rivers provided the following response:

*Rivers Directorate reservoir inundation maps indicate that this site is in a potential area of inundation emanating from Begny Lake Reservoir. Rivers Directorate is in possession of information confirming that Begny Lake Reservoir has 'Responsible Reservoir Manager Status'. Consequently, Rivers Directorate has no reason to object to the proposal from a reservoir flood risk perspective.*

175. NI Water were also consulted as part of the application process and responded with no objections subject to conditions.
176. NI Water advise that there is available capacity at the Wastewater Treatment Works. They also were able to confirm that there is a public water main, a public surface water sewer and a public foul sewer within 20 metres of the site.
177. Water Management Unit were consulted and responding stating that they have considered the impacts of the proposal on the surface water environment and on the basis of the information provided is content with the proposal. DAERA standing advice is provided to be included in any decision notice.
178. Officers have no reason to disagree with the advice of the consultees. Based on a review of the information and advice received from DfI Rivers, Water Management Unit and NI Water, it is accepted that the proposal complies with policies FLD1, FLD2, FLD3 and FLD5 of the Plan Strategy.

### **Historic Environment and Archaeology**

179. The application site is in close proximity to the medieval parish Church of Drumberra, lies just west of the historic core of the 17th Century settlement of Dromara and is adjacent to a historic crossing point of the Lagan. The site also contains the mill race for a corn mill which is recorded in the Industrial Heritage Record (IHR 03176).
180. The recorded archaeological sites and monuments nearby are indicators of a high archaeological potential for further, previously unrecorded archaeological remains which may be encountered within the application site.
181. As previously conditioned under approved planning application LA05/2019/0701/F, the agreement and implementation of a developer-funded programme of archaeological works were attached in order to identify and record any archaeological remains in advance of new construction, or to provide for their preservation in situ.
182. The applicant has since discharged these conditions under applications LA05/2025/0159/DC and LA05/2025/0486/DC (discharged 10/04/25 & 22/07/25 respectively). The results of which are publicly available via Historic Environment Division Map Viewer.
183. Results of Archaeological Watching Brief (Northern Archaeological Consultancy) document determined:

*Nothing of an archaeological nature was uncovered during testing. As nothing has been uncovered, it is the opinion of the licensed archaeologist that no further work is required within the area of the development.*

184. Officers are therefore satisfied that the application meets the requirements of policies HE1, HE2, HE3 and HE4 of the Local Development Plan, as such no further information will be required following a decision.

Policy HE9- Development affecting the Setting of a Listed Building

185. The application site is located in proximity to Listed record HB19/07/019, an 1800s bridge. During the lifetime of the application, HED were consulted and provided the following response:

*Historic Environment Division- Historic Buildings has considered the effects of the proposal on the listed building HB19/07/009 and on the basis of the information provided, has no comment to make as the proposal is far enough away from the listed building that it's setting will remain unaffected.*

186. It is therefore considered that the proposal will comply with policy HE9, in that the proposed development would not adversely affect the setting of a listed building.

### **Natural Heritage**

187. Supporting documents submitted include:

- Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (WM Associates) 20/11/2024.

188. The supporting statement provides the following information;

*Preliminary ecological surveys of the site have been carried out to determine the presence of bats, otters, badgers, newts and breeding birds. In terms of protected species it was determined in the PEA that structural vegetation on site had the potential to host nesting birds, as a result it was recommended that any clearance of this vegetation should be undertaken outside the breeding season which is between the 1st March and 31st August.*

*A preliminary bat survey was also carried out, it identified that while the wider area was categorised as being moderately productive for bats, largely due to the river, there was almost no structural cover along the river, however two trees along the periphery of the site presented a moderate risk of bat roosts. The PEA determined that should these trees need to be removed a bat survey would be required. The development proposed does not intend to remove either tree.*

*In terms of otters a hold entrance was identified to the northeast boundary of the site along the River Lagan, in order to mitigate any potential impacts on any otters utilising the holt, a 30m exclusion zone is require, the proposed housing*

*development does not impinge upon the exclusion zone and therefore there will be no impact on the otters as a result of the development.*

189. The application site is located south of the River Lagan and is tenuously connected to European sites. Belfast Lough is approximately 80km downstream of the proposed development.
190. NIEA Natural Environment Division were consulted and provided the following feedback:

*Natural Environment Division has considered the impacts of the proposal on designated sites and other natural heritage interests and, based on the information provided, has no concerns.*

191. Further to this, a consultation was raised with Shared Environmental Services which provided the following feedback:

*Having considered the nature, scale, timing, duration and location of the project it is concluded that it is eliminated from further assessment because it could not have any conceivable effect on a European site.*

192. It is considered that the proposed development will not give rise to significant adverse effects on habitats or species of ecological or nature conservation value, the proposed development is unlikely to result in any cumulative impact upon these features when considered alone or with other developments nearby.
193. It is concluded that the proposed development would therefore comply with the requirements as set out in policies NH1, NH2, NH3, NH4 and NH5 of the Local Development Plan 2032.

## **Renewable Energy**

### Policy RE2- Integrated Renewable Energy

194. The proposed plans indicate that each dwelling will be equipped with solar panels.
195. In addition, the proposal shall be constructed in line with current NI Building Regulations and the DfC Design Standards which emphasises sustainable design and energy efficiency.
196. It is therefore considered that the proposal complies with Policy RE2.

## **Consideration of Representations**

197. Two objections were received. Each point raised has been addressed below:

- Moybrick Road cannot facilitate any more housing, the road is too narrow, sewage can't cope, flooding concerns and Dromara cannot cope with any more social housing.
- We are genuinely concerned that the proposed new development is situated on the edge of the River Lagan and feel that this would impact a number of houses that are situated on down the river. As you will be aware there has been ongoing flooding issues in the village over the past few years.
- The current sewerage treatment plant for the village is already over capacity and needs improvement to cope with the existing buildings in the village. No new development should be considered until the existing plant has been improved or replaced.
- As far as we know this is also a flood plain where the site is being considered.
- Flooding in Dromara seems to be an issue that is not being resolved within any government agencies.
- The current local infrastructure including roads, GP surgery and Schools in the area cannot support the additional numbers of people that this development would bring.
- The GP surgery in Dromara is stretched with the number of patients it currently has so an influx of people will mean an even bigger strain on an already overloaded system.
- The local schools in the area would find it hard to accommodate any additional pupils.

198. The application has been assessed against relevant policy criteria, in addition to relevant consultations raised. DFI Roads, NI Water and Northern Ireland Housing Executive were consulted and provided no objections to the proposal.

199. NIHE have confirmed that the proposal will contribute to the Dromara Housing need numbers.

200. DFI Roads have confirmed that the proposal will not prejudice road safety or significantly inconvenience the flow of traffic.

201. In addition, NI Water and advised that there is capacity at Wastewater Treatment works.

202. Furthermore, A Flood Risk Assessment was submitted in support of the application. Following consultation with DFI Rivers no objections or concerns were raised.

203. Concerns raised regarding servicing capacities of local GP surgeries or schools are not under the remit of planning and therefore do not constitute part of the assessment of this application.

## Conclusions

204. For the reasons outlined above, the proposed development satisfies the requirements of the relevant policies of the Local Development Plan 2032 Plan strategy as described in the preceding paragraphs.

### Recommendations

205. It is recommended that planning permission is approved.

### Conditions

206. The following conditions are recommended:

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. The vehicular access, including any visibility splays and any forward sight distance, shall be provided in accordance with Drawing No. 02d, published to the Planning Register on 25<sup>th</sup> September 2025, prior to the commencement of any other works or other development hereby permitted. The area within the visibility splays and any forward sight line shall be cleared to provide a level surface no higher than 250 mm above the level of the adjoining carriageway and such splays shall be retained and kept clear thereafter.

REASON: To ensure there is a satisfactory means of access in the interest of road safety and the convenience of road users.

3. The access gradient to the dwellings hereby permitted shall not exceed 8% (1 in 12.5) over the first 5 m outside the road boundary. Where the vehicular access crosses footway or verge, the access gradient shall be between 4% (1 in 25) maximum and 2.5% (1 in 40) minimum and shall be formed so that there is no abrupt change of slope along the footway.

REASON: To ensure there is a satisfactory means of access in the interests of road safety and the convenience of road users.

4. No dwelling shall be occupied until hard surfaced areas have been constructed in accordance with the approved proposed site plan drawing no. 02d, published to the Planning Register on 25<sup>th</sup> September 2025 to provide adequate facilities for parking and circulating within the site. No part of these hard surfaced areas shall be used for any purpose at any time other than for the parking and movement of vehicles.

Reason: To ensure that adequate provision has been made for parking.

5. Any existing street furniture or landscaping obscuring or located within the proposed carriageway, sight visibility splays, forward sight lines or access shall, after obtaining permission from the appropriate authority, be removed, relocated or adjusted at the applicant's expense.

REASON: In the interest of road safety and the convenience of road users.

6. The site layout shall be provided in accordance with Drawing No. 02d, published to the Planning Register on 25<sup>th</sup> September 2025, to provide a working strip of minimum 5m but up to 10m where considered necessary from the top of the bank. The working strip shall be protected from impediments (including tree planting, hedges, permanent fencing and sheds), land raising or any future development. Access to and from the maintenance strip should be available at all times.

Reason: To protect the integrity of the watercourse and any encroachment therein.

7. Prior to the construction of the drainage network, the applicant shall submit a final drainage assessment, compliant with FLD 3 and LDP 2032, to be agreed with the Planning Authority which demonstrates the safe management of any out of sewer flooding emanating from the surface water drainage network, agreed under Article 161, in a 1 in 100 year event including an allowance for climate change and urban creep.

Reason: In order to safeguard against surface water flood risk to the development and manage and mitigate any increase in surface water flood risk from the development to elsewhere.

8. Foul sewage shall be connected to the main sewer with Northern Ireland Water approval and maintained thereafter for the lifetime of the development.

Reason: To protect the amenity of neighbouring dwellings with respect to odour

9. Prior to the construction of the drainage network, the applicant shall submit a final drainage assessment, compliant with FLD 3 and LDP 2032, to be agreed with the Planning Authority which demonstrates the safe management of any out of sewer flooding emanating from the surface water drainage network, agreed under Article 161, in a 1 in 100 year event including an allowance for climate change and urban creep.

Reason: In order to safeguard against surface water flood risk to the development and manage and mitigate any increase in surface water flood risk from the development to elsewhere.

10. No retained tree shall be cut down, uprooted or destroyed or have its roots damaged within the root protection area nor shall arboriculture work or tree surgery take place on any retained tree other than in accordance with the approved plans and particulars, without the written consent of the Council.

Reason: To ensure the continuity of amenity afforded by existing trees.

11. The existing boundaries of this site as illustrated on the approved proposed site plan drawing no. 01b, published to the Planning Register on 28<sup>th</sup> April 2025 shall be retained unless necessary to prevent danger to the public in which case a full explanation shall be given to the Council in writing prior to their removal.

Reason: To ensure the development integrates into the surroundings and to ensure the maintenance of screening to the site.

12. All hard and soft landscape works shall be carried out in accordance with Drawing No. 11c published to the planning portal on 21<sup>st</sup> November 2025 and the approved details. The works shall be carried out no later than the first available planting season after occupation of the first dwelling.

Reason: To ensure the provision, establishment and maintenance of a high standard of landscape

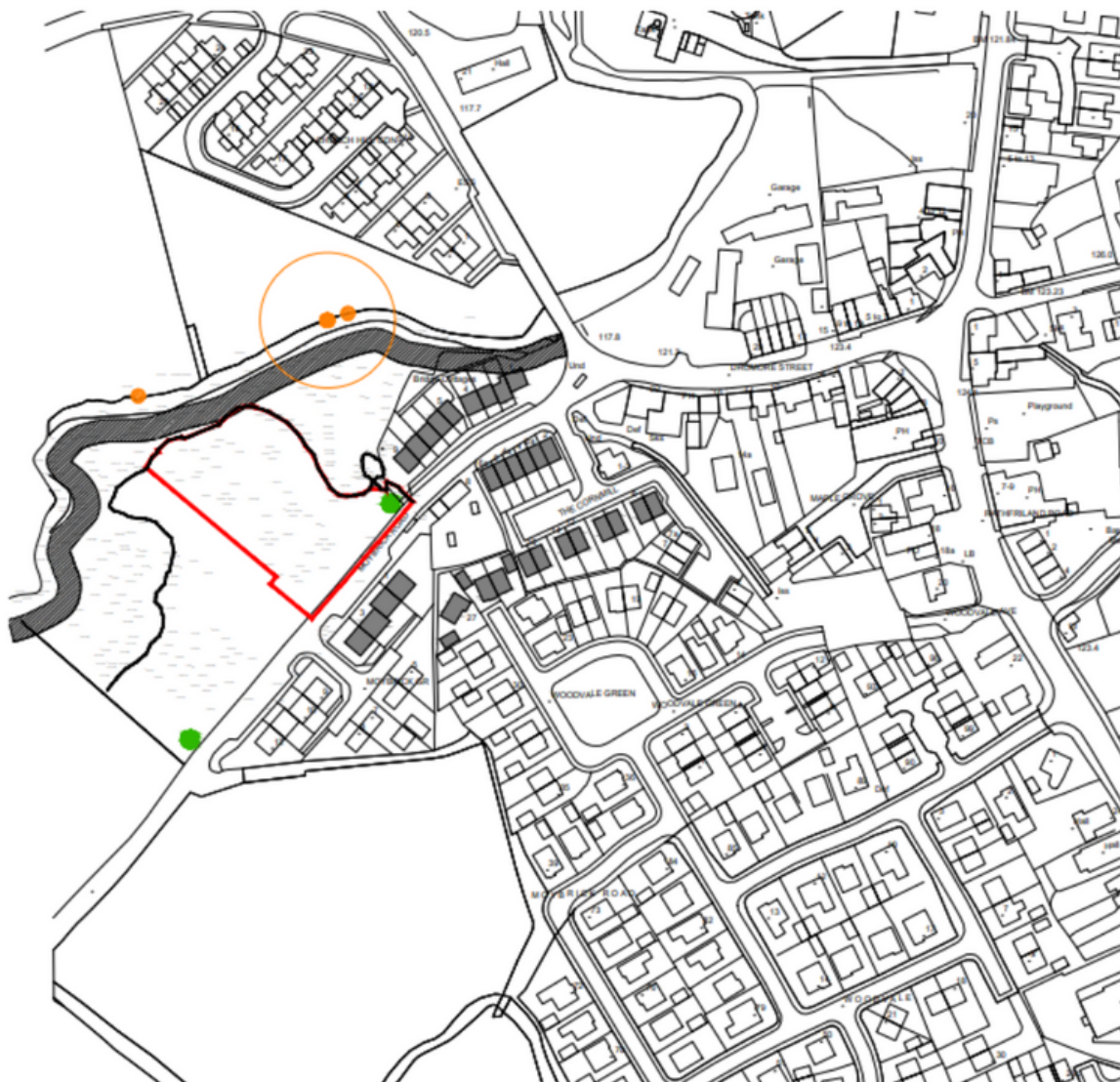
13. If within a period of 5 years from the date of the planting of any tree, shrub or hedge, that tree, shrub or hedge is removed, uprooted or destroyed or dies, or becomes, in the opinion of the Council, seriously damaged or defective, another tree, shrub or hedge of the same species and size as that originally planted shall be planted at the same place, unless the Council gives its written consent to any variation.

Reason: To ensure the provision, establishment and maintenance of a high standard of landscape.

14. All hard and soft landscape works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details and the appropriate British Standard or other recognised Codes of Practice. The works shall be carried out during the first available planting season prior to the occupation of any part of the development.

Reason: To ensure the provision, establishment and maintenance of a high standard of landscape.

**Site Location Plan – La05/2024/0768/F**



## Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council

| Planning Committee      |  |
|-------------------------|--|
| Date of Committee       | 02 February 2026                         |
| Committee Interest      | Local Application (Called In) - Addendum |
| Application Reference   | LA05/2023/0170/F                         |
| Date of Application     | 08 February 2023                         |
| District Electoral Area | Killultagh                               |
| Proposal Description    | Proposed infill dwelling and garage      |
| Location                | 92 Glenavy Road, Lisburn, BT28 3UX       |
| Representations         | None                                     |
| Case Officer            | Catherine Gray                           |
| Recommendation          | Refusal                                  |

### Summary of Recommendation

1. This application was included on the Schedule of Applications for consideration by the Committee on 12 January 2026. The recommendation was to refuse planning permission.
2. After the application was presented and debated, Members agreed to defer consideration of the application to allow for a site visit to take place. A site visit took place on Thursday 22 January 2026. A separate note of this site visit is provided as part of the papers.

### Further Consideration

3. Members were reminded that the site visit was arranged to provide them with an opportunity to observe the proposed site in its context.
4. The site location plan was used to demonstrate the extent of the site boundary and to allow the Members to understand which buildings the officer had taken account of in their assessment

5. The Head of Planning & Capital Development outlined the proposal to Members highlighting the site boundary and adjacent properties which formed the ribbon of development. It was clarified that the gap was measured from the existing dwelling to the closest agricultural building.
6. Members walked along the road frontage and observed the site from both sides of the road in the context of the neighbouring properties. A query in respect about the visual linkage between the buildings took photographs of the ribbon of development from the opposite side of the road. These are included at Appendix 1.
7. Whilst the gable of a fourth building can be observed from a static viewpoint in front of the site from the opposite side of the road there is no footpath and this is not a natural place to observe the site from.

The Glenavy Road is a very busy and fast road where the national speed limit applies. Travelling along the Glenavy Road in either direction whilst there may be glimpsed views it is not obvious that a driver would be aware at speed of a ribbon of development comprised of four or more building and of which two are dwellings. The dwellings are staggered and one set back which means the agricultural buildings in between break up the ribbon, so it does not appear to be visually linked. The advice at paragraphs 00 to 00 of the main report remains unchanged.

### Conclusions and Recommendation

8. The purpose of the site visit was to afford Members an opportunity to visit the site and observe the proposed development in its context.
9. Officers were asked to consider if the dwelling at 88 Glenavy Road contributed to the ribbon of development and were all buildings visible when viewed from the southern side of the road. For the reasons set out in preceding paragraphs the dwelling at No.88 Glenavy Road is set back from the road but in front of the dwelling sits a domestic garage which sits gable on to the road is visible when viewed with the dwelling at No. 90, the agricultural sheds, the application site and the dwelling at No. 92 Glenavy Road.
10. Irrespective of the building at 88 Glenavy Road being visually linked with the application site and contributing to the ribbon of the development when viewed from the southern side of the Glenavy Road the site for a proposed dwelling and garage the gap is not sufficient to accommodate two dwellings within an otherwise substantial and continuously built-up frontage and if permitted would add to ribbon development along the Glenavy Road.
11. The information contained in this addendum should be read in conjunction with the main officer's report previously presented to Committee on 12 January 2026.

**Refusal Reasons**

12. The following reasons for refusal are recommended:
- The proposal is contrary to Policy COU1 of the Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council Plan Strategy, in that it is not a type of development which in principle is considered to be acceptable in the countryside.
  - The proposal is contrary to policy COU8 of the Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council Plan Strategy, in that, the gap is not sufficient to accommodate two dwellings within an otherwise substantial and continuously built-up frontage and if permitted would add to ribbon development along the Glenavy Road. Furthermore, the buildings forming the substantial and continuously built-up frontage are not visually linked.
  - The proposal is contrary to policy COU16 criteria e) of the Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council Plan Strategy, in that the proposal would have an adverse impact on the rural character of the area.

Site Location Plan – LA05/2023/0170/F



Revisions



Project:  
PROPOSED IN-FILL DWELLING AT  
92 GLENVY ROAD, LISBURN

Client:  
MRS L MORROW

Title:  
SCHEME DESIGN:  
LOCATION MAP

Copyright

Draw No: 22030-01 | Date: SEPT 2022 | Scale: As Shown @ A3

## Appendix 1

Photographs taken on day of site visit 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2026









## **LISBURN & CASTLEREAGH CITY COUNCIL**

### **Report of a Planning Committee Site Visit held at 10.05 am on Thursday, 22 January, 2026 at 92 Glenavy Road, Lisburn**

#### **PRESENT:**

Alderman J Tinsley (Chair)

Alderman O Gawith

Councillors P Catney and N Trimble

#### **IN ATTENDANCE:**

Head of Planning & Capital Development (CH)

Principal Planning Officer (PS)

Member Services Officer (FA)

Apologies for non-attendance were submitted by Alderman M Gregg and Councillors D J Craig and A Martin.

The site visit was held in order to consider the following application:

LA05/2023/0170/F – Proposed infill dwelling and garage at 92 Glenavy Road, Lisburn.

This application had been presented for determination at the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 12 January, 2026. The Officer's recommendation had been to refuse planning permission given that the application was contrary to policy COU8 in that the development, if approved, would add to a ribbon of development along the Glenavy Road. In addition to this the proposal had not met with the expectations test in that the gap was not sufficient to accommodate two dwellings. The Committee had agreed to defer consideration to allow for a site visit to take place.

The Head of Planning & Capital Development stated that the purpose of the site visit was for Members to appraise themselves of the proposed site in the context of the surrounding buildings and landscape features.

The Head of Planning & Capital Development with the assistance of a site location plan outlined the nature of the proposed development to Members highlighting the site boundary and relationship to adjacent properties which formed the ribbon of development. Members walked along the road frontage and observed the site from both sides of the road in the context of the neighbouring properties.

At the request of Members, the Head of Planning & Capital Development read policy COU8 aloud to assist Members with understanding the different references to buildings and dwellings.

In response to Members' queries, the Head of Planning & Capital Development and the Principal Planning Officer advised:

- that not all buildings appeared to be on the site location map;
- that the gap to be considered is from building to building; and
- that two semi-detached dwellings within one building was not the proposal in front of the members and they must be concerned with the existing pattern of development. Officers have already provided advice on what is the established pattern of residential development.

At the request of Members, the Officers took photographs of the ribbon of development from the opposite side of the road for inclusion in any report being brought back to committee.

There being no further business, the site visit was terminated at 10.28 am.

## Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council

|                           |                                     |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Council/Committee         | Planning Committee                  |
| Date of Committee Meeting | 12 January 2026                     |
| Committee Interest        | Local (Called In)                   |
| Application Reference     | LA05/2023/0170/F                    |
| Proposal Description      | Proposed infill dwelling and garage |
| Location                  | 92 Glenavy Road, Lisburn, BT28 3UX  |
| Representations           | None                                |
| Case Officer              | Catherine Gray                      |
| Recommendation            | <b>Refusal</b>                      |

### Summary of Recommendation

1. This is a local application. It is presented to the Committee for determination in accordance with the Protocol for the Operation of the Committee in that it has been Called In.
2. The application is presented to the Planning Committee with a recommendation to refuse as the proposal is contrary to Policy COU8 of the Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council Plan Strategy, in that the development, if approved, would add to a ribbon of development along Glenavy Road. Furthermore, the proposal does not meet the exceptions test in that the gap is not sufficient to accommodate two dwellings within an otherwise and substantial and continuously built-up frontage. And the buildings forming the substantial and continuously built-up frontage are not visually linked.
3. The proposal is also contrary to Policy COU1 of the Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council Plan Strategy, in that it is not a type of development which in principle is considered to be acceptable in the countryside.

## Description of Site and Surroundings

### Site

4. The application site is located to the northeastern side of the Glenavy Road, Lisburn. It occupies a side garden of a dwelling at 92 Glenavy Road.
5. The western boundary is currently undefined as it is part of a larger garden. The northern boundary is the rear boundary and is defined by a post and wire fence with mature vegetation along it. The eastern boundary is defined by a mixture of mature vegetation and small evergreen trees. The southern boundary is the front boundary and is defined by a hedgerow of conifer trees and there is a grass verge between it and the road.
6. With regards to the topography of the site, as you move in a northerly direction the land rises.
7. Immediately adjacent and east of the application site is an existing farmyard and associated outbuildings.

### Surroundings

8. The site is located within the countryside, and the surroundings are rural in character. The area is characterised by domestic dwellings, agricultural land and agricultural buildings.

## Proposed Development

9. This is a full application for one infill dwelling and garage.
10. Additional information submitted in support of the application is as follows:
  - DAERA Consent to Discharge

## Relevant Planning History

11. The associated planning history is a material consideration. The following is the relevant planning history:

| Planning Reference | Site address                              | Proposal                            | Decision                         |
|--------------------|---|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| LA05/2019/0111/O   | Lands located between Nos. 92 and Nos. 90 | Proposed infill dwelling and garage | Permission Granted<br>02/07/2019 |

|  |                                       |  |  |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|--|
|  | Glenavy Road,<br>Lisburn,<br>BT28 3UX |  |  |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|--|

12. Whilst planning permission was previously accepted on 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2019 there is no record of a submission of an application for approval of reserved matters and the time period for submission expired on 02 July 2022 before this application was received on 08 February 2023.
13. This is an application for full permission. The infill policy changed following receipt of a direction in June 2023 to adopt the Plan Strategy of the Local Development Plan. As the circumstances are changed in the intervening period the principle of development is considered afresh.

### Consultations

14. The following consultations were carried out:

| Consultee                 | Response     |
|---------------------------|--------------|
| DfI Roads                 | No objection |
| LCCC Environmental Health | No objection |
| NI Water                  | No objection |
| Water Management Unit     | No objection |

### Representations

15. No representations have been received in respect of this proposal.

### Local Development Plan

16. Section 6(4) of the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 requires that in making a determination on Planning applications regard must be had to the requirements of the local development plan and that the determination of applications must be in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

### Plan Strategy 2032

17. It is stated at Part 1 of the Plan Strategy that:

*Transitional arrangements will apply in relation to the existing Plan designations. The existing Development Plans which remain in effect for different parts of the Council area are set out in Chapter 2 (Existing Development Plans). Following adoption the Development Plan will be the Plan Strategy and any old Development Plan, with the Plan Strategy having priority in the event of a conflict. Regulation 1 states that the old Development Plans will cease to have effect on adoption of the new LDP at Local Policies Plan (LPP) stage.*

*The Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan (BMAP) was intended to be the Development Plan on its adoption in September 2014. This Plan was subsequently declared unlawful following a successful legal challenge and therefore remains in its entirety un-adopted.*

*BMAP in its post-inquiry form was at an advanced stage and therefore remains a material consideration. Draft BMAP (November 2004) in its pre-inquiry form also remains a material consideration in conjunction with recommendations of the Planning Appeals Commission Public Local Inquiry Reports.*

18. In accordance with the transitional arrangements, the development plan is the Plan Strategy and the Lisburn Area Plan (LAP). Draft BMAP remains a material consideration
19. The site is located in the countryside in the Lisburn Area Plan (LAP) and within draft BMAP.
20. This application is for residential development in the open countryside. The strategic policy for new housing in the countryside [Strategic Policy 09] states:

*The Plan will support development proposals that:*

- (a) *provide appropriate, sustainable, high quality rural dwellings, whilst protecting rural character and the environment*
- (b) *resist urban sprawl in the open countryside which mars the distinction between the rural area and urban settlements*
- (c) *protect the established rural settlement pattern and allow for vibrant sustainable communities.*

21. The following operational policies in Part 2 of the Plan Strategy also apply.

#### **Development in the Countryside**

22. This is an application for a single dwelling in the open countryside. Policy COU 1 – Development in the Countryside states:

*There are a range of types of development which in principle are considered to be acceptable in the countryside and that will contribute to the aims of sustainable development.*

*Details of operational policies relating to acceptable residential development proposals are set out in policies COU2 to COU10.*

*Details of operational policies relating to acceptable non-residential development proposals are set out in policies COU11 - COU14.*

*There are a range of other non-residential development proposals that may in principle be acceptable in the countryside. Such proposals must comply with all policy requirements contained in the operational policies, where relevant to the development.*

*Any proposal for development in the countryside will also be required to meet all of the general criteria set out in Policies COU15 - COU16.*

#### Infill/Ribbon Development

23. This is an application for a single proposed dwelling and garage presented as an infill opportunity. Policy COU 8 – Infill/Ribbon Development states:

*Planning permission will be refused for a building which creates or adds to a ribbon of development.*

*Exceptionally, there may be situations where the development of a small gap, sufficient to accommodate 2 dwellings within an otherwise substantial and continuously built-up frontage, may be acceptable. For the purpose of this policy a substantial and continuously built-up frontage is a line of 4 or more buildings, of which at least 2 must be dwellings, excluding domestic ancillary buildings such as garages, sheds and greenhouses, adjacent to a public road or private laneway.*

*The proposed dwellings must respect the existing pattern of development in terms of siting and design and be appropriate to the existing size, scale, plot size and width of neighbouring buildings that constitute the frontage of development. Buildings forming a substantial and continuously built-up frontage must be visually linked.*

24. The justification and amplification of COU8 states:

*A ribbon of development cannot be defined by numbers, although, if there are two buildings fronting a road and beside one another, there could be a tendency to ribboning. Most frontages are not intensively built up and have substantial gaps between buildings, giving visual breaks in the developed appearance of the locality. Infilling of these gaps is visually undesirable and, in most cases, creates or adds to a ribbon of development.*

25. This dwelling was previously granted as an infill opportunity under application LA05/2019/0111/O. No reserved matters was submitted. As the policy has changed in the intervening period and this is a full application, policies COU1 and COU8 need to be considered.
26. This application also falls to be assessed against the requirements of Policies COU15 Integration and Design of Buildings in the Countryside and COU 16 Rural Character and other Criteria of the Plan Strategy.
27. Policy COU15 - Integration and Design of Buildings in the Countryside states:

*In all circumstances proposals for development in the countryside must be in accordance with and sited and designed to integrate sympathetically with their surroundings and of an appropriate design.*

*A new building will not be permitted if any of the following apply:*

- a) *it is a prominent feature in the landscape*
- b) *it is not sited to cluster with an established group of buildings*
- c) *it fails to blend with the landform, existing trees, buildings, slopes and other natural features which provide a backdrop*
- d) *the site lacks long established natural boundaries or is unable to provide a suitable degree of enclosure for the building to integrate into the landscape*
- e) *it relies primarily on the use of new landscaping for integration*
- f) *the design of the building is inappropriate for the site and its locality*
- g) *ancillary works do not integrate with their surroundings.*

28. Policy COU16 – Rural Character and other Criteria states:

*In all circumstances proposals for development in the countryside must be in accordance with and must not cause a detrimental change to or further erode the rural character of an area.*

*A new development proposal will be unacceptable where:*

- a) *it is unduly prominent in the landscape*
- b) *it is not sited to cluster with an established group of buildings*
- c) *it does not respect the traditional pattern of settlement exhibited in that area*
- d) *it mars the distinction between a settlement and the surrounding countryside, or otherwise results in urban sprawl*
- e) *it has an adverse impact on the rural character of the area*
- f) *it would adversely impact on residential amenity*
- g) *all necessary services, including the provision of non mains sewerage, are not available or cannot be provided without significant adverse impact on the environment or character of the locality*
- h) *the impact of ancillary works (with the exception of necessary visibility splays) would have an adverse impact on rural character*
- i) *access to the public road cannot be achieved without prejudice to road safety or significantly inconveniencing the flow of traffic.*

### **Natural Heritage**

29. The proposal includes removal of vegetation for sight splays. Policy NH2 Species Protected by Law states:

#### *European Protected Species*

*Planning permission will only be granted for a development proposal that is not likely to harm a European protected species.*

*In exceptional circumstances a development proposal that is likely to harm these species may only be permitted where:*

- a) *there are no alternative solutions; and*

- b) it is required for imperative reasons of overriding public interest; and*
- c) there is no detriment to the maintenance of the population of the species at a favourable conservation status; and*
- d) compensatory measures are agreed and fully secured.*

#### *National Protected Species*

*Planning permission will only be granted for a development proposal that is not likely to harm any other statutorily protected species and which can be adequately mitigated or compensated against.*

*Development proposals are required to be sensitive to all protected species, and sited and designed to protect the, their habitats and prevent deterioration and destruction of their breeding sites or resting places. Seasonal factors will also be taken into account.*

#### 30. Policy NH5 Habitats, Species or Features of Natural Heritage Importance states

*Planning permission will only be granted for a development proposal which is not likely to result in the unacceptable adverse impact on, or damage to known:*

- a) priority habitats b) priority species c) active peatland d) ancient and long-established woodland e) features of earth science conservation importance f) features of the landscape which are of major importance for wild flora and fauna g) rare or threatened native species h) wetlands (includes river corridors) i) other natural heritage features worthy of protection.*

*A development proposal which is likely to result in an unacceptable adverse impact on, or damage to, habitats, species or features listed above may only be permitted where the benefits of the proposed development outweigh the value of the habitat, species or feature. In such cases, appropriate mitigation and/or compensatory measures will be required.*

#### **Waste Management**

#### 31. The submitted information details that the foul sewerage would be disposed of via a Klargester Bio-disc (or equal). Policy WM 2 - Treatment of Wastewater states:

*Development proposals to provide mains sewage Wastewater Treatment Works (WwTWs) will be permitted where it is demonstrated to the Council there is a need for new or extended capacity requirements and the new facilities comply with the requirements of Policy WM1.*

*Development relying on non mains sewage treatment will only be permitted where it is demonstrated to the Council and its statutory consultees that there is sufficient capacity to discharge treated effluent to a watercourse and that this will not create or add to a pollution problem or create or add to flood risk.*

## Access and Transport

32. The P1 Form indicates that this development requires the construction of a new access to the public road. Policy TRA 2 – Access to Public Roads states:

*Planning permission will only be granted for a development proposal involving direct access, or the intensification of the use of an existing access, onto a public road where:*

- a) *it will not prejudice road safety or significantly inconvenience the flow of vehicles; and,*
- b) *it does not conflict with Policy TRA3 Access to Protected Routes.*

*Consideration will also be given to the nature and scale of the development, character of existing development, the contribution of the proposal to the creation of a quality environment, the location and number of existing accesses and the standard of the existing road network together with the speed and volume of traffic using the adjacent public road and any expected increase.*

## Renewable Energy

33. Micro-generation energy and low carbon energy technologies are encouraged and supported for all types of residential development. Policy RE2 Integrated Renewable Energy states:

*Planning permission will be granted for a development proposal which integrates renewable energy technology including microgeneration and passive solar design (PSD) in its layout, siting and design, where it meets the provisions of Policy RE1 and provided the technology is appropriate to the location in terms of any visual or amenity impact it may have.*

## Regional Policy and Guidance

### Regional Policy

34. The SPPS Edition 2 was published in December 2025. It is the most recent regional planning policy, and it is stated at paragraph 1.5 that:

*The provisions of the SPPS apply to the whole of Northern Ireland. They must be taken into account in the preparation of Local Development Plans (LDP) and are material to all decisions on individual planning applications and appeals.*

35. Paragraph 3.8 of the SPPS states:

*That the guiding principle for planning authorities in determining planning applications is that sustainable development should be permitted, having regard*

*to the development plan and all other material considerations, unless the proposed development will cause demonstrable harm to interest of acknowledged importance.*

36. Paragraph 6.232 states:

*In plan-making and decision-taking, planning authorities should encourage and support the appropriate use of micro-generation energy, including the retrofitting of renewable and low carbon energy technologies.*

37. With regards to infill development. Paragraph 6.73 of the SPPS states:

*Provision should be made for the development of a small gap site in an otherwise substantial and continuously built-up frontage. Planning permission will be refused for a building which creates or adds to a ribbon of development.*

38. It is further stated at paragraph 6.78 of the SPPS that:

*Supplementary planning guidance contained within Building on Tradition: A Sustainable Design Guide for the Northern Ireland Countryside must be taken into account in assessing all development proposals in the countryside.*

### **Retained Regional Guidance**

39. Whilst not policy, the following guidance documents remain material considerations:

#### **Building on Tradition**

40. With regards to Infill development, Building on Tradition guidance notes;

- *It is not acceptable to extend the extremities of a ribbon by creating new sites at each end.*
- *Where a gap frontage is longer than the average ribbon plot width the gap may be unsuitable for infill.*
- *When a gap is more than twice the length of the average plot width in the adjoining ribbon it is often unsuitable for infill with two new plots.*
- *Some ribbon development does not have a consistent building set back. Where this occurs the creation of a new site in the front garden of an existing property is not acceptable under CTY 8 if this extends the extremities of the ribbon.*
- *A gap site can be infilled with one or two houses if the average frontage of the new plot equates to the average plot width in the existing ribbon.*

41. It also notes that:

*4.5.0 There will also be some circumstances where it may not be considered appropriate under the policy to fill these gap sites as they are judged to*

*offer an important visual break in the developed appearance of the local area.*

4.5.1 *As a general rule of thumb, gap sites within a continuous built-up frontage, exceeding the local average plot width may be considered to constitute an important visual break. Sites may also be considered to constitute an important visual break depending on local circumstances. For example, if the gap frames a viewpoint or provides an important setting for the amenity and character of the established dwellings.'*

42. Building on Tradition includes infill principles with examples.

- *Follow the established grain of the neighbouring buildings.*
- *Allow for clear definition of front and back, public and private sides to the plot which help address overlooking issues.*
- *Design in scale and form with surrounding buildings*
- *Retain existing boundaries where possible and construct new boundaries using native hedgerows and natural stone walls to assist integration and local biodiversity*
- *Use a palette of materials that reflect the local area*

43. With regards to wastewater treatment, Building on Tradition [page 131] states that:

*If Consent for Discharge has been granted under the Water (Northern Ireland) Order 1999 for the proposed development site, a copy of this should be submitted to accompany the planning application. This is required to discharge any trade or sewage effluent or any other potentially polluting matter from commercial, industrial or domestic premises to waterways or underground strata. In other cases, applications involving the use of non-mains sewerage, including outline applications, will be required to provide sufficient information about how it is intended to treat effluent from the development so that this matter can be properly assessed. This will normally include information about ground conditions, including the soil and groundwater characteristics, together with details of adjoining developments existing or approved. Where the proposal involves an on-site sewage treatment plant, such as a septic tank or a package treatment plant, the application will also need to be accompanied by drawings that accurately show the proposed location of the installation and soakaway, and of drainage ditches and watercourses in the immediate vicinity. The site for the proposed apparatus should be located on land within the application site or otherwise within the applicant's control and therefore subject to any planning conditions relating to the development of the site.*

### **Development Control Advice Note 15 – Vehicular Access Standards**

44. The policies in PPS 3 are replaced by the Plan Strategy but the guidance in Development Control Advice Note 15 – Vehicular Access Standards states at paragraph 1.1 that:

*The Department's Planning Policy Statement 3 "Development Control: Roads Considerations" (PPS3) refers to the Department's standards for vehicular accesses. This Development Control Advice Note (DCAN) sets out and explains those standards.*

## Assessment

### Policy COU 8 Infill/Ribbon Development

45. The initial step is to consider whether the proposal would create or add to a ribbon of development. The Justification and Amplification text of Policy COU8 describes a ribbon as:

*'A ribbon of development cannot be defined by numbers, although, if there are two buildings fronting a road and beside one another, there could be a tendency to ribboning. Most frontages are not intensively built up and have substantial gaps between buildings, giving visual breaks in the developed appearance of the locality. Infilling of these gaps is visually undesirable and, in most cases, creates or adds to a ribbon of development.'*

46. It is contended that the proposal would engage ribbon development by virtue of the fact that there is one building to the west of the application site and furthermore five buildings to the east of the application site, all which share a common frontage to the Glenavy Road.

#### *The issue of exception*

47. Whilst the premise of Policy COU8 is that planning permission will be refused for a building which creates or adds to a ribbon of development, it does however advise that there may be exceptions whereby the development of a small gap, sufficient to accommodate two dwellings within an otherwise substantial and continuously built-up frontage, may be acceptable. The exceptions test also requires that the proposed dwellings must respect the existing pattern of development in terms of siting and design and be appropriate to the existing size, scale, plot size and width of neighbouring buildings and the buildings forming the substantial and continuously built-up frontage must be visually linked.
48. The next step in determining whether an 'infill' opportunity exists is to identify whether an otherwise substantial and continuously built-up frontage is present on the ground. Policy COU8 states that for the purposes of this policy, a substantial and continuously built-up frontage is a line of four or more buildings, of which at least two must be dwellings (excluding domestic ancillary buildings such as garages, sheds and greenhouses) adjacent to a public road or private laneway.
49. The associated justification and amplification text of policy COU8 notes that for the purposes of this policy, a building's frontage must extend to the edge of the public road or private laneway and not be separated from it by land or

development outside of its curtilage.

50. Excluding domestic ancillary buildings, it is acknowledged that there is one domestic dwelling to the west of the application site and three agricultural outbuildings and a dwelling house east of the application site.
51. As you move in an easterly direction along the Glenavy Road, you also have the property at 93 Glenavy Road which consists of a dwelling house and garage/outbuilding to the rear. The dwelling house has a frontage to the road. Then you have the application site which is the side garden of 92 Glenavy Road. Then you have numerous farm buildings and yard with two separate entrances from the public road, three of these farm buildings have a frontage to the road. Then you have the dwelling house at 90 Glenavy Road and it has frontage to the road.
52. It is therefore considered that there is a substantial and continuously built-up frontage consisting of 4 or more buildings of which at least two must be dwellings (excluding domestic ancillary buildings) present on the ground. Thus, the application meets the first exceptions test of Policy COU8.
53. The second step in the process of determining whether an infill opportunity exists or not is to identify if the gap site is small. For the purpose of policy the gap must be '*sufficient to accommodate two dwellings.*' The third element that is required in order to qualify as an infill site is that the existing pattern of development must be respected in terms of siting and design and be appropriate to the existing size, scale, plot size and width of neighbouring buildings that constitute the frontage of development.
54. Policy COU8 relates to the gap between road frontage buildings. The gap is measured between the two closest (applicable) existing buildings either side of the application site.
55. In this instance, this is the gap between the dwelling house within the curtilage of property 92 Glenavy Road and the closest farm outbuilding just west of the application site. The gap measures circa 46.5 metres.
56. The application site has a frontage of 18 metres. 92 Glenavy Road has a frontage of 45 metres, the farm complex associated with 90 Glenavy Road has a frontage of 114 metres and the domestic dwelling at 92 Glenavy Road has a frontage of 43 metres.
57. The proposed plot width is 18 metres at the narrowest point and 30 metres at the widest point. Considering the existing plot frontages and widths of the neighbouring properties, the gap is not sufficient to accommodate two dwellings in the context of the existing pattern of development.
58. This proposal is only for one dwelling and does not comply with the policy test in this regard.
59. In terms of assessing whether the existing pattern of development would be respected, the Justification and Amplification text associated with COU8 states:

*'Assessment of what constitutes an existing pattern of development must take account and have regard to the size and scale of buildings, their siting and position in relation to each other and the size and width of individual plots upon which they are situated.'*

60. The dwelling house of 92 Glenavy Road is set back by 20 metres from the road, the farm outbuildings are set back by 23, 2 and 22 metres respectively from the road. The dwelling house of 90 Glenavy Road is set back by 17 metres from the road.
61. There is no uniform building line along this part of the Glenavy Road. The proposed dwelling is sited to be in keeping with the staggered pattern of building line. The siting of the proposed dwelling would be in keeping with the existing building line however would not be acceptable in the context of the pattern of development of the existing and continually built-up frontage as the gap is not large enough to accommodate two dwellings consistent with the established pattern of development.
62. The dwelling types that comprise the existing and continuously built-up frontage vary in design. A dwelling of the proposed design would be acceptable for its location as it is simple in nature and would have similar scale, form and palette of materials to the adjacent buildings in compliance with the guidance within Building on Tradition.
63. Turning to plot sizes, 92 Glenavy Road has a plot size of circa 2138 square metres, the application site has a plot size of 1028 square metres, the farm complex associated with number 90 Glenavy Road has a plot size of circa 14,000 square metres and the domestic property of number 90 Glenavy Road has a plot size of circa 1845 square metres.
64. Taking on board the plot sizes and the shapes and variation in the surrounding area, the proposal is reflective of the plot sizes in the area for a single dwelling.
65. Turning to the width of the neighbouring buildings, the dwelling house at 92 Glenavy Road measures 11 metres in width, two of the farm outbuildings measure 72 metres and the other 9 metres in width and the dwelling house at 90 Glenavy Road measures 17 metres in width. The proposed dwelling has a width of 17 metres. The proposed dwelling has a similar width to the other dwelling houses within the substantial and continuously built-up frontage.
66. The final part of the test requires consideration of whether the buildings are visually linked. When standing on the Glenavy Road in front of the site, all four buildings are not visually linked to one another as the existing farm shed to the east of the site blocks the view of the dwelling house of number 90 as it sits closer to the road. Only the dwelling at 92 Glenavy Road and the farm shed are visually linked.
67. The proposal does not comply with policy COU8 and therefore also does not comply with policy COU1.

### **Policy COU 15 Integration and Design of Buildings in the Countryside**

68. The proposal is a roadside site however it would be set back in the landscape roughly in line with the neighbouring buildings and there would be a backdrop of existing trees and vegetation behind it. It is considered that the proposal would not be a prominent feature in the landscape. The proposal is sited to cluster

with the adjacent buildings on the neighbouring properties. Criteria a) and b) are met.

69. The land level within the site rises as you move in a northerly direction. It is proposed to cut into the landscape to the rear of the site slightly to accommodate the proposed dwelling. A retaining wall of no more than 1.8m to the rear is proposed. The works are minimal given the existing and proposed levels and is considered to be acceptable in this context. The proposal would easily blend into the existing landform. Criteria c) is met.
70. The site has a rolling landscape backdrop with trees along field boundaries in behind the site and the existing site boundaries are being retained as far as possible and provide a suitable degree of enclosure. The proposal would not rely primarily on new landscaping for integration purposes. Criteria d) and e) are met.
71. The proposed dwelling is one and a half storey with a proposed ridge height of 6.9m above the finished floor level. The design is simple in nature with an appropriate solid to void ratio, vertical emphasis windows and chimneys positioned on the ridge. The proposed garage is a double garage attached to the rear of the dwelling house. The design is in keeping with the guidance within Building on Tradition and also is appropriate for the site and its rural locality.
72. The proposed external material finished include the roof to be blue/black natural or man-made slate or flat profile tiles, the walls to be smooth or lightly textured render in self-colour or pale paint finished with smooth render surrounds to openings, the rainwater goods are black half round gutters and round profile downpipes and the windows and external doors are to be white or light coloured painted timber or u-pvc frames. These are considered to be acceptable for the site and its rural location. Criteria f) is met.
73. With regards to the ancillary works, the sections detail that only a small amount of cut is required due to the rise in levels towards the rear of the site and the ancillary works to provide the access are considered to be minimal. The ancillary works would integrate with their surroundings. Criteria g) is met.
74. The proposal complies with policy COU15.

#### **Policy COU 16 Rural Character and other Criteria**

75. For the reasons discussed above at paragraph 68, the proposal would not be a prominent feature in the landscape. And the proposal is sited to cluster with an established group of buildings. Criteria a) and b) are met.
76. As discussed above, it is considered that the proposal would respect the traditional pattern of settlement exhibited in the area. Criteria c) is met.
77. The proposal is not near the edge of a Settlement Development limit and would not mar the distinction between a settlement and surrounding countryside or otherwise result in urban sprawl. Criteria d) is met.

78. The proposal would add to a ribbon of development as discussed above and as a consequence would have an adverse impact on the rural character of the area. Criteria e) is not met.
79. The proposal is designed to ensure that no overlooking would be caused into any neighbour's private amenity space or have a negative impact on residential amenity. Criteria f) is met.
80. It is considered that all necessary services can be provided without adverse impact on the environment or character of the locality. Criteria g) is met.
81. The impact of the ancillary works as discussed above at paragraph 73 is designed as not to have an adverse impact on rural character. Criteria h) is met.
82. Access to the public road can be achieved without prejudice to road safety and would not significantly inconvenience the flow of traffic. DfI Roads have raised no objections to the proposal. Criteria i) is met.
83. It is therefore considered that the proposal does not comply with policy COU 16 as it would have an adverse impact on the rural character of the area.

#### **Waste Management**

84. The information submitted with the application details the water supply will be from the mains, the surface water will be disposed of via a soakaway and that a Klargestar Bio-disc (or equal) is proposed to deal with the foul sewerage.
85. The Environmental Health Department of the Council has been consulted and have raised no objections to the proposal with regards to waste management. NI Water has been consulted and have recommended approval. Water Management Unit of NIEA has been consulted and have raised no objections and refer to the standing advice.
86. Having regard to the above referenced consultation responses and in review of the submitted information in respect of sewerage and water quality there is adequate evidence available to enable the Council to make an informed decision in relation to potential impacts on the environment and amenity. The applicant has demonstrated that these works will not create or add to a pollution problem and the proposal complies with policy WM 2.

#### **Access and Transport**

87. Detail submitted with the application shows that a new access to the Glenavy Road is proposed. A new access is proposed with visibility splays of 2.4 metres by 142 metres in both directions. It is noted that the Glenavy Road is not a Protected Route.
88. There is also adequate space within the site to provide parking for three cars and manoeuvring space for vehicles within the curtilage of the site.

89. DfI Roads has been consulted and offer no objection to this proposal. Based on a review of the submitted plans and having regard to the advice of the consultee it is considered that the proposal complies with policies TRA2 and TRA7.

### **Natural Heritage**

90. The application site is not within or adjacent to any designated areas such as ASSI's etc. and there are no watercourses within or adjacent to the site.
91. The application site consists of semi-improved grassland / a manicured lawn and there are no existing buildings on the site to be demolished as part of the proposal.
92. A portion of the front boundary of the site will need to be removed to accommodate the visibility splays. However this vegetation is identified in the bio diversity checklist as a conifer tree hedgerow that does not have any ecological value. However, some compensatory planting is being provided.
93. Having reviewed the detail of the proposal and cross referenced it against Natural Environment Division's (NED) standing advice for biodiversity checklists, consultation with NED is not considered to be necessary in this case.
94. Having considered the detail, and on the basis of the information submitted, it is considered that the proposal would not harm any natural heritage and complies with the policies NH2 and NH5.

### **Renewable Energy**

95. The proposed dwelling would be subject to the latest revision to the building control regulations which requires the applicant to incorporate low carbon technologies. The dwelling is also built south-facing to achieve passive solar design.
96. Should other renewal energy proposals come forward once the dwelling is built, the applicant has an opportunity to use permitted development rights to integrate renewable energy and low carbon technologies.
97. For these reasons it is considered that the proposal is capable of meeting the requirements of policy RE2.
98. It is further noted that the requirements of paragraph 6.232 of the SPPS Edition 2 have been considered and are in broad alignment with the requirements of policy RE2 of the Plan Strategy. No additional policy requirements apply.

## Conclusions

99. All material considerations have been assessed; no representations have been received raising any concerns and all consultation responses have been taken on board.
100. For the reasons outlined above, it is considered that the proposal does not comply with Policies COU1, COU8 and COU16 of the Plan Strategy.

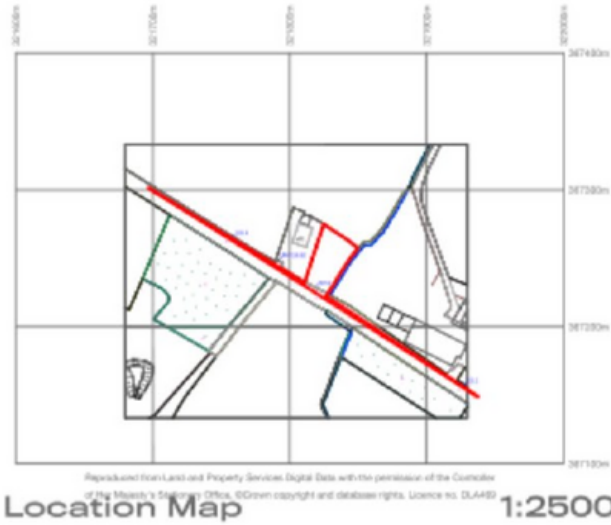
## Recommendation

101. It is recommended that planning permission is refused.

## Proposed refusal reason(s)

102. The following refusal reason(s) are recommended:
103. The proposal is contrary to Policy COU1 of the Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council Plan Strategy, in that it is not a type of development which in principle is considered to be acceptable in the countryside.
104. The proposal is contrary to policy COU8 of the Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council Plan Strategy, in that, the gap is not sufficient to accommodate two dwellings within an otherwise substantial and continuously built-up frontage and if permitted would add to ribbon development along the Glenavy Road. Furthermore, the buildings forming the substantial and continuously built-up frontage are not visually linked.
105. The proposal is contrary to policy COU16 criteria e) of the Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council Plan Strategy, in that the proposal would have an adverse impact on the rural character of the area.

Site Location Plan – LA05/2023/0170/F



Revisions



Project:  
PROPOSED IN-FILL DWELLING AT  
92 GLENNAVY ROAD, LISBURN

Client:  
MRS L MORROW

Title:  
SCHEME DESIGN:  
LOCATION MAP

|          |               |
|----------|---------------|
| Drawn:   | Date:         |
| 22030-01 | SEPT 2022     |
|          | Scale:        |
|          | As Shown @ A3 |

Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council

| Planning Committee        |   |
|---------------------------|---|
| Date of Committee Meeting | 02 February 2026  |
| Committee Interest        | Local Application (Called In) – Addendum  |
| Application Reference     | LA05/2023/0494/F  |
| Proposal Description      | Conversion of and single storey extension to disused mill to provide 1 no. dwelling and associated site works |
| Location                  | Approximately 33 metres south west of 18 Gransha Close Comber, BT23 5RD                                       |
| Representations           | 14 Objections   |
| Case Officer              | Kevin Maguire   |
| Recommendation            | Approval  |

Background

1. This application was included in the Schedule of Applications for consideration by the Committee at a meeting on 6 October 2025. The recommendation was to refuse planning permission.
2. Following the presentation by officers, Members agreed to defer consideration of the application to allow for a site visit and further information to be submitted by the applicant.

Local Development Plan

Local Development Plan Context

3. The policies outlined in Paragraphs 29 to 42 of the main officer report are still relevant to this proposal, but as a new residential use is proposed as part of the conversion and extension of a building Policy RE2 Integrated Renewable Energy is also identified as a policy consideration.

4. Policy RE2 states that:

*Planning permission will be granted for a development proposal which integrates renewable energy technology including micro-generation and passive solar design (PSD) in its layout, siting and design, where it meets the provisions of Policy RE1 and provided the technology is appropriate to the location in terms of any visual or amenity impact it may have.*

#### Regional Policy and Guidance

5. Since the application was brought to Planning Committee the Strategic Planning Policy Statement (Edition 2) was published (December 2025). The SPPS Edition 2 was published in December 2025. It is the most recent regional planning policy and it is stated at paragraph 1.5 that:

*“the provisions of the SPPS apply to the whole of Northern Ireland. They must be taken into account in the preparation of local development plans (LDP) and are material to all decisions on individual planning applications and appeals.”*

6. Paragraph 2.1 of the SPPS recognises that an objective of the planning system is to secure the orderly and consistent development of land whilst furthering sustainable development and improving well-being.

7. Paragraph 6.232 of the SPPS Edition 2 is new and states that:

*‘In plan-making and decision-taking, planning authorities should encourage and support the appropriate use of micro-generation energy, including the retrofitting of renewable and low carbon energy technologies’.*

8. It is considered that there are no implications for this proposal following the publication of the SPPS Edition 2, only paragraph 6.232 is new and the need for integrated renewable energy was taken account of in the preparation of policy within the LDP Plan Strategy. The requirements of policy RE2 which is

drafted consistent with the wording of paragraph 6.232 are considered later in the report.

#### Amended submission and additional supporting information

9. Additional information was submitted to the Council on 12 November 2025. The information included:

- Amended plans including site survey, site layout, existing/proposed floor plans and elevations, landscaping plan, roads plan, existing/proposed tree constraints plan
- Letter from planning consultant
- New structural assessment report

10. Following the submission of this additional information a further round of neighbour notification and re-advertisement was undertaken to allow the public to provide comment.

#### Additional Representation

11. A further two letters of objection were received after this advertisement and notification. These representations raised the following issues:

- The changes to the building would remove trace of the original
- The extension to the existing structure is now more prominent in height and bulk
- The original building is asymmetrical and will require a section of the original wall to be removed
- No access provided to Gransha River from Gransha Close and right of way has been established
- Removal of mature trees
- Traffic safety exiting the site
- The applications noted in the agent's recent supporting letter are not comparable with this proposal.

- Existing ridge and eaves levels of the existing building are not shown
- Existing Floor Plans and Elevations are incorrect and misleading
- Proposed Floor Plans and Elevations do not reflect the retention of existing structure
- Changes to external ground levels will displace flood waters to other areas
- The proposed landscaping within the floodplain has not been considered by the FRA and could also displace floor water
- Removal of mature trees will significantly damage the building structure
- Required intervention will not be 'minimal' as required under planning policy
- Photomontage is inaccurate and a false height indicated gives the impression that the new part will not be more prominent than existing
- Required insulation to the existing walls has not been indicated, and this would reduce floorspace in existing building further

#### Further Consideration

12. At paragraphs 64-67 of the main officer report it is outlined in detail the reasons why the Council considered that the proposal would not result in a sympathetic conversion of a vernacular building or suitably locally important for use as a single dwelling where this would secure its upkeep and retention.
13. This issue has been reassessed based on the further information received which has allowed a better understanding of the condition of the current structure, which has included the revised supporting structural inspection report (OCSC) and further consultation of this report and associated drawings with an independent chartered engineer employed by the Council.
14. This additional information has addressed some of the concerns previously raised that the structure would not result in a sympathetic conversion of a vernacular building for use as a single dwelling. It is contended that this would assist in the secure and upkeep of the remaining structure.

15. No further evidence/information was submitted in relation to the lack of remaining visible features associated with the building and their links to its previous use as a flax mill, however based on previous consultations with Historic Environment Division (HED), which consider this to be an industrial heritage site (IHR 02740:001:00) and a 'non-listed vernacular building', there is no grounds to doubt the previous use associated with the existing structure.
16. HED have recommended conditions to be attached should the application be approved including the submission of a programme of archaeological works and post-excavation analysis.
17. On this basis it is now considered that the proposal would allow for the sympathetic conversion and adaption of a non-listed vernacular building for use as a single dwelling where this would secure its upkeep and retention.
18. At paragraphs 78-86 of the main officer report it is outlined the reasons why the Council considered the proposal had not adequately demonstrated that the building was capable of being made structurally sound or otherwise improved. In this regard additional information was submitted in support of the application in the form of a new structural inspection report.
19. The submitted report revisited the existing building on site and noted that substantial vegetation within and around the existing structure has been removed to allow greater access to the site and subsequently better understanding of the condition of the structure.
20. The key points raised in relation to assessing the structural condition in relation to the proposed development is noted below:

Remark #1.1 - The proposed roof is a vaulted design with no ceiling joists and notes that *'This type of roof design therefore creates lateral eave spread loads on the top of the existing walls'* and will be accommodated by a *'reinforced concrete ring beam'* with *'wall plate to be anchored to the ring beam'* with roof structure fixed securely to this.

Remark #1.3 – It is noted that the *'north eastern corner of the building is being affected by a tree trunk exerting pressure on the side of the structure. This has led to cracking on the front and side elevations. This tree should be removed or at least trimmed back to avoid further impact on the structure'*. It is recommended that these cracks could be stitched with the *'Cintec Masonry tie'*.

Remark #1.4 – This relates to southern elevation which the report states *'is generally in good condition'* however some vegetation has been removed which has left gaps, with the wall in *'fair'* condition around these and which could be made good by tasking down any loose stones and replacing with matching stone and mortar. Towards the rear of the building *'the wall is in poor condition'* which *'could have occurred through continuous flow of rainwater from the roof along with the raised ground levels'*.

Remark #1.5 – As noted in Remark #1.4 the corner with the western elevation *'has suffered from mortar wash out'* and this section of the wall will need to be repaired through lowering the ground of the property *'to allow access to inspect and repair the external face of the wall'*. It is noted that *'the remainder of the wall is in fair condition with repointing required in different locations'*.

Remark #1.6 – The northern elevation *'contains a number of partially filled door and window openings'*, stating that *'vegetation has been removed from the structure and local repairs to stonework and mortar will be required'*. As noted within Remark #1.3 there is a crack an adjacent tree trunk is thought to have created and the tree is to be cut back/removed and *'crack stitched with Cintec wall ties'*.

Remark #1.7 – Relates to condition of internal walls and note that the removal of vegetation has given a clear view of their condition. It is stated that the *'vegetation and it's removal has caused damage to the stonework'* and *'...This damage will require remedial work to replace the stonework and mortar locally'*. It is noted, however, that the *'overall integrity of the walls is in fair condition although further weathering or damage from adjacent trees will adversely affect them'*.

Remark #1.8 – This pertains to the proposed plans and notes *‘the removal of the apex over the front entrance and replacement with a glazed unit with an arched lintel head’*. With regards to foundations, it is noted that the *‘existing walls will have shallow foundations’* and therefore *‘the floor level should be determined so that it does not push the formation level below the wall foundation level, i.e. lead to undermining of the walls’*, with *‘careful needling work will be required to create the opening to the extension’*.

21. In the report’s conclusion it stated that:

*‘The structure was not found to be suffering from subsidence but excavations should be minimised around the structure to prevent undermining the walls. The walls were also not found to significantly out of plumb. From this inspection it is considered that, with appropriate sequencing and conservation based methods of repair and reinstatement that this structure could be retained for the proposed use’*.

22. Subsequent to the submission of this additional structural information the Council further engaged the services of a chartered engineer to get an independent view on the potential impacts on the existing structure through the proposed work and is based on the information contained within the most recent structural inspection report prepared by OCSC.

23. Principally this review assesses:

- 1) Whether the building is, in principle, suitable for conversion
- 2) Whether the proposed works carry a foreseeable risk of causing partial or total collapse during the construction process.

24. The review undertaken by PW Design notes that:

*‘the main developments from previous submissions are that the existing building no longer requires underpinning and the majority of vegetation has been removed affording a clearer picture of the structure’*.

25. The review has noted a summary of the findings from the OCSC report. In relation to 'Structural Integrity' while it is noted the *'walls exhibit repairable deterioration'* and consider the proposed interventions appropriate, PW Design has questioned the effectiveness 'Cintec wall ties for crack stitching the large crack caused by the tree trunk' however accept that *'details will be developed at design stage'*.
26. In relation to risk the review advises that *'collapse is possible without proper sequencing and temporary works, but risk is low if mitigation measures are followed'*. The review has suggested a number of potential mitigation measures including the following: temporary propping/needling for all openings, phased masonry rebuild, early repair of vulnerable corners, installation of ties, lintel replacement and ring beam before alterations, staged reduction of rear ground levels, and structural inspections during works.
27. Overall, it has been advised that the building is capable of conversion, with no evidence of irreversible failure. It is noted that *'the proposals require minimum change to the existing building'*, and the *'construction of the new wing will have no bearing on the structural integrity of the existing building especially with a raft or similar foundation construction'*. The review also advises that *'local deterioration is repairable and the ring beam and new roof will enhance stability'*.
28. Based on the information submitted, including new drawings, visual structural assessment and independent review of this information, it has now been demonstrated that the building is reasonably capable of being made structurally sound or otherwise improved and would therefore meet this part of policy COU4 of the Lisburn and Castlereagh City Plan Strategy.
29. At paragraphs 70-72 of the main officer report it is outlined the reasons why the Council considered the proposal would not maintain or enhance the form, character and architectural features, design and setting of the existing building and would have an adverse effect on the character and appearance of the locality, as detailed in Policy COU4 (b).

Commented [CH1]: What is the policy?

30. The amendments to the proposed plans include a reduction of extension footprint, from approximately 67.5 to 56 square metres, as well as changes to the angle to which the extension sits relative to the existing building, the addition of a glass link, and an arched window to the front elevation of the existing building, as well as the inclusion of other minor changes.
31. At Paragraph 71 of the main officer report, it noted that based on the current structure it was not clear that the proposed ridge height would be in keeping with the form of the original building. In assessing the removal of substantial vegetation around the structure, particularly at the entrance as demonstrated through the most recent structural inspection information, it is now considered that the existing drawing showing the likely ridge height of the existing building is accurate. The most recent proposed floor plans indicate the removal of the mezzanine level in the existing building which would reduce the need to include a higher ridge height. Consequently, the proposed elevations show that the ridge height of the existing structure has been slightly reduced on the current plans from previous submissions and are therefore considered to be retained within the overall envelope of the existing structure.
32. In relation to the proposed extension to the existing building it is noted that while the ridge height is no lower in the most recent plans in comparison with the original plans, the reduced size of the proposed extension and the angle to which it sits relative to the existing building is welcomed.
33. In addition, the connection with the existing building, specifically the provision of a glass link and an arched window to the front of the existing building, would reduce the substantial area of glazing in the original drawing would more appropriately retain and enhance the form, character and design of the existing building.
34. The provision of a simpler glazed link between the existing and new structure would more clearly differentiate between the architectural elements of the older elements, with the utilisation of reused brick in the upper section above the arched window would avoid the creation of a pastiche between the old and new stonework at this critical elevation.

35. Given the acceptance of these other proposed changes, it is on balance contended that the proposal would maintain the setting of the existing building and would not adversely affect the character of the existing or impact on the appearance of the locality.
36. Based on the amendments submitted it has now been demonstrated that proposal would on balance be in accordance with the requirements of criterion b) of policy COU4 of the Lisburn and Castlereagh City Plan Strategy.
37. Paragraph 73 of the main officer report had specifically outlined the reason why it was considered that the proposed new extension would not be sympathetic to the scale and massing of the existing building. While this has partially been covered in the above paragraphs under criterion b), it is again considered that the reduction in the length of the extension elevation, change in the angle of the proposed block relative to the existing structure and the inclusion of the glass link between the two elements provide a more acceptable solution in relation to scale and massing. Based on these amendments it is now considered that the proposal would on balance be in accordance with the requirements of criterion c) of policy COU4 of the Lisburn and Castlereagh City Plan Strategy.
38. The integration and design of buildings in the countryside were covered at paragraphs 87-92 of the main officer report. Paragraph 91 had specifically outlined the reason why it was considered that the design of the building was not appropriate for the site and its locality.
39. As noted in the consideration of policies COU4 b) and c) in this addendum report, taking into account the proposed amendments including the reduction of proposed floorspace and the use of new architectural elements and finishes, it is accepted that on balance the revised proposals would be in accordance with the requirements of criterion f) of policy COU15.
40. A proposed Landscaping Plan and Tree Constraints plan have been submitted clearly outlining the trees to be removed, either to facilitate development or due to poor condition as outlined on the tree survey report.

41. It is not considered the removal of the trees as indicated on the plan and the proposed replanting as detailed would have any adverse implications for the previously submitted ecological information and most recent consultation response from NIEA Natural Environment Division.
42. Strategic Planning Policy Statement (Edition 2) was published in December 2025 and states a paragraph 6.232 that when making decisions *'planning authorities should encourage and support the appropriate use of micro-generation energy, including the retrofitting of renewable and low carbon energy technologies'*.
43. In considering this requirement the applicant has advised that the proposed dwelling has been designed with Passive House Principals in mind. They have noted that this encourages:  
  
*'a fabric first approach: solar gain, increased insulation, good airtightness, triple glazing, MVHR, reduced thermal bridge details'*, which would in turn reduce *'the operational energy of the house, reducing the carbon use of the building over its operational lifetime'*.
44. In addition to the justification of the proposal in relation to Policy RE2 the applicant has also submitted amended plans showing 'In roof solar panels' and vehicle charging point.
45. The Council would consider that the proposed dwelling would be subject to the latest revision to the building control regulations which requires the applicant to incorporate low carbon technologies. Should other renewal energy proposals come forward once the dwelling is built, the applicant has an opportunity to use the permitted development to integrate renewable energy and low carbon technologies. For these reasons it is considered that the proposal can meet the requirements of policy RE2.

### Consideration of additional Representations

46. Consideration of the representations initially received was detailed at Paragraph 133 of the main officer report and these would still be relevant to the proposal.

47. Following the submission of amended plans and additional information and further round of neighbour notification and re-advertisement was undertaken which has resulted in the receipt of two additional letters of objection. The assessment of the issues raised in these letters are as follows:

- The changes to the building would remove trace of the original

The existing building to be converted, with the exception of a break which will have to be created to provide access to the proposed extension, is to be retained and existing structure utilised. As noted in the Structural Inspection survey some local repairs on loose stones caused by removal of vegetation may be required in addition to a new roof structure and window/door openings, however the majority of the structure will be retained in situ. The extended element is lower in ridge height than the existing building and has been reduced in length from previous plans, therefore it is contended that this will not remove traces of the original building.

- The extension to the existing structure is now more prominent in height and bulk

The revised drawings do indicate a slightly higher ridge height for the proposed extension than previously proposed however this appears to be a design consideration to maintain a consistent finished floor level through the existing and proposed sections of the proposal. It is, however, noted that the proposed section has been reduced in length and would still be at a lower ridge height than the existing building.

Taking this into consideration as well as the increased level of planting within the site it would on balance be considered that the proposal would

- The original building is asymmetrical and will require a section of the original wall to be removed.

The existing building being asymmetrical would not preclude the conversion of this building. It is noted that a section of the southern elevation will need to be removed to provide access to the new extension. The independent review of the structural report notes that the construction of the new wing will have no bearing on the structural integrity of the existing building. The mitigation measures put forwards include the temporary propping/needling for all openings. It is advised that that collapse is possible without proper sequencing and temporary works however the risk is low if the stipulated mitigation measures are followed correctly.

- No access provided to Gransha River from Gransha Close and right of way has been established.

The applicant has noted in their application form that there is no public right of way through the site to the adjacent river for angling. There is no visible track between the road and river on site. It may be the case that there is some old legacy right of way however no details of this have been provided and would be a civil matter between the landowner and relevant parties to determine if this can be retained. Notwithstanding this point, the applicant has clarified that that the site boundary does not extend to the river's edge, with a five metre maintenance strip for DfI Rivers providing access to the watercourse should this be agreed by parties.

- Removal of mature trees

Some trees are to be removed to accommodate the proposed dwelling, with a number of these displaying poor physiological and structural

condition. Several other trees display fair condition but are required to be removed as they or their associated crown spread are within the footprint of the proposed dwelling. It has been determined that none of the trees are protected by a Tree Preservation Order. Based on the level of proposed compensatory planting and rising ground to the rear of the site it is contended that the removal of these trees as shown would be acceptable in this case.

- Traffic safety exiting the site

The amended plans propose the same access details as assessed within the original report. Under those plans DfI Roads were content subject to conditions and it is expected that the revised plans would not result in any additional traffic safety concerns.

- The applications noted in the agent's recent supporting letter are not comparable with this proposal.

Two applications were cited within the letter submitted by the applicant which it was claimed would have a similar context to the proposal. It is however contended that each application must be considered on its own merits and in this case there are a few substantial differences in the circumstances between the approvals cited and the proposal.

- Existing ridge and eaves levels of the existing building are not shown

Details showing the eaves and presumed ridge height of the existing building are shown on the most recent existing floorplan and elevation drawing (Drawing 03C). This also shows the level of the assumed first floor level and existing ground floor within a section drawing and gives a better understanding of the current building on site and the impact of the proposed extension. It is noted that the mezzanine floor has now been omitted from the proposed plans within the existing structure.

- Existing Floor Plans and Elevations are incorrect and misleading

Previous drawings submitted included an incorrect scale which has now been amended. It is considered based on the building on the ground, which currently includes the ground level slightly lower within the building than the surrounding ground, generally reflects what has been shown in the existing plans submitted with the application. The application proposes the retention and conversion of the existing structure, and any approval will be subject to this being carried out.

- Proposed Floor Plans and Elevations do not reflect the retention of existing structure

It is considered that the proposed elevations would generally reflect the existing elevations submitted with the application in terms of eaves/head height. In relation to the width of the piers to the front elevation the most recent existing and proposed plans have been amended to more accurately reflect the wider pier to the left-hand side of the front elevation.

- Changes to external ground levels will displace flood waters to other areas

A further drawing has been submitted with the latest submission outlining existing and proposed ground levels. While the parking and hardstanding space has been amended slightly under these new plans the changes shown in the external ground level is generally small (between 0.1m and 0.3m), with these changes being outside of the defined 1 in 100 year strategic floodplain as shown in the submitted Flood Risk Assessment. In this respect it is not considered that the proposal as shown would be contrary to Policy FLD1 and the LCCC Plan Strategy or have implications for DfI Rivers previous consultation response.

- The proposed landscaping within the floodplain has not been considered by the FRA and could also displace floor water

It is acknowledged that additional planting has been proposed as part of the amended plans now under consideration. It is also noted that while there is more substantial planting proposed previous iterations of the planting plan were consulted with DfI Rivers who did not previously object to the presence of planting within the designated floodplain. Furthermore it is accepted that additional planting could be introduced within the wider site at any time following the site being developed and this could not be controlled by planning.

- Removal of mature trees will significantly damage the building structure

It is evident through the updated Structural report that a substantial amount of vegetation has now been removed from within and on the existing building structure. The report notes that some vegetation removal has left gaps in some of the stonework and is recommended that any loose stonework should be taken down and all existing vegetation removed with local repairs needed with matching stone and mortar. It is stated that the north eastern corner of the building is being affected by a tree trunk which has resulted in some cracking to the front and side of the structure. It is considered, however that careful removal or trimming back of this tree will limit any further damage and the report notes that this crack could be addressed through masonry ties. The Council's independent review of the Structural report has queried the effectiveness of Cintec wall ties as noted however consider that such details could be developed and agreed at design stage. Overall it is contended that the removal of the remaining vegetation could be undertaken without further significant damage to the structure, and through careful work on site any damage caused or voids exposed could be adequately dealt with through local repairs.

- Required intervention will not be 'minimal' as noted under planning policy

A further objection has noted that due to significant tree removal, the required intervention will not be 'minimal' in any aspect, as required under the planning policy. It is noted that within Policy COU4 reference is made to 'minimal intervention' but only insofar as it relates to the conversion or reuse of a traditional non-residential building to provide more than one dwelling, which does not apply to the current proposals. In addition, 'minimal intervention' relates specifically to the use and alteration of the building fabric, and should not be conflated with other ancillary works to the site, including the removal of trees in this case.

- Photomontage is inaccurate and a false height indicated gives the impression that the new part will not be more prominent than existing

The photomontage has been submitted by the applicant to give a 3D interpretation of what the proposal is likely to look like on the ground, however should this development be approved this photomontage has been accepted for information only and would not be considered as an approved drawing.

- Required insulation to the existing walls has not been indicated, and this would reduce floorspace in existing building further

Details showing insulation are not normally provided as part of the planning application process. While this has not been shown on the current plans this information will be required as part of the building control process. The thickness of the internal insulation and therefore the area that this would take up would ultimately depend on the type of insulation used. It is, however, considered that even when taking this into account that the proposed one bedroom dwelling would on balance meet the space standards and outlined in the LCCC Plan Strategy Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG).

## Conclusions

48. The advice previously offered that planning permission should be refused has been re-considered in light of the additional information submitted in support of the application. Based on the revised scheme the proposed refusal reasons previously outlined are withdrawn and it is considered on balance the proposal would be a sensitive conversion of a non-residential building. The criteria of the relevant policies described above are met in full.
49. The information contained in this addendum should be read in conjunction with the main DM officer's report previously presented to Committee on 06 October 2025.

## Recommendation

50. It is recommended that planning permission is approved subject to the following conditions:
- As required by Section 61 of the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011, the development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of 5 years from the date of this permission.

Reason: Time Limit.

- The vehicular access, including any visibility splays and any forward sight distance, shall be provided in accordance with Drawing No. 05D published to the Planning Register on the 13<sup>th</sup> November 2025, prior to the commencement of any other works or other development hereby permitted. The area within the visibility splays and any forward sight line shall be cleared to provide a level surface no higher than 250 mm above the level of the adjoining carriageway and such splays shall be retained and kept clear thereafter.

Reason: To ensure there is a satisfactory means of access in the interest of road safety and the convenience of road users.

- The access gradient to the dwelling hereby permitted shall not exceed 8% (1 in 12.5) over the first 5 m outside the road boundary. Where the vehicular access crosses footway or verge, the access gradient shall be between 4% (1 in 25) maximum and 2.5% (1 in 40) minimum and shall be formed so that there is no abrupt change of slope along the footway.

Reason: To ensure there is a satisfactory means of access in the interests of road safety and the convenience of road users.

- No dwelling shall be occupied until hard surfaced areas have been constructed, in accordance with approved Drawing No. 05D published to the Planning Register on the 13<sup>th</sup> November 2025, to provide adequate facilities for parking and circulating within the site. No part of these hard surfaced areas shall be used for any purpose at any time other than for the parking and movement of vehicles.

Reason: To ensure that adequate provision has been made for parking.

- Any existing street furniture or landscaping obscuring or located within the proposed carriageway, sight visibility splays, forward sight lines or access shall, after obtaining permission from the appropriate authority, be removed, relocated or adjusted at the applicant's expense.

Reason: In the interest of road safety and the convenience of road users.

- No site works of any nature or development shall take place until a programme of archaeological work (POW) has been prepared by a qualified archaeologist, submitted by the applicant and approved in writing by the Planning Authority in consultation with Historic Environment Division, Department for Communities. The POW shall provide for:

- The identification and evaluation of archaeological remains within the site;

- Mitigation of the impacts of development through licensed excavation recording or by preservation of remains in-situ;
- Post-excavation analysis sufficient to prepare an archaeological report, to publication standard if necessary; and
- Preparation of the digital, documentary and material archive for deposition.

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

- No site works of any nature or development shall take place other than in accordance with the programme of archaeological work approved under Condition 6.

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

- A programme of post-excavation analysis, preparation of an archaeological report, dissemination of results and preparation of the excavation archive shall be undertaken in accordance with the programme of archaeological work approved under Condition 6. These measures shall be implemented and a final archaeological report shall be submitted to the Planning Authority within 12 months of the completion of archaeological site works, or as otherwise agreed in writing with the Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that the results of archaeological works are appropriately analysed and disseminated and the excavation archive is prepared to a suitable standard for deposition.

- Prior to works commencing on site, all existing trees shown on Drawing 12 (Proposed Tree Constraints plan) published to the Planning Register on 13 November 2025, as being retained shall be protected by appropriate fencing in accordance with British Standard 5837:2012 Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction – Recommendations. No retained tree shall be cut

down, uprooted or destroyed, or have its roots damaged within the crown spread nor shall arboricultural work or tree surgery take place on any retained tree other than in accordance with the approved plans and particulars, without the written approval of the Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure the continuity of amenity afforded by existing trees and in the interests of biodiversity.

- No vegetation clearance/removal of hedgerows, trees or shrubs/demolition of buildings or structures shall take place between 1 March and 31 August inclusive, unless a competent ecologist has undertaken a detailed check for active bird's nests immediately before clearance/demolition and provided written confirmation that no nests are present/birds will be harmed and/or there are appropriate Updated July 2023 measures in place to protect nesting birds. Any such written confirmation shall be submitted to the Planning Authority within 6 weeks of works commencing.

Reason: To protect breeding birds.

- No retained tree shall be cut down, uprooted or destroyed, or have its roots damaged within the crown spread nor shall arboricultural work or tree surgery take place on any retained tree be topped or lopped other than in accordance with the approved plans and particulars, without the written approval of the Council. Any arboricultural work or tree surgery approved shall be carried out in accordance with British Standards 3998, 1989 Recommendations for Tree Work.

Reason: To ensure the continuity of amenity afforded by existing trees.

- If any retained tree is removed, uprooted or destroyed or dies within 3 years from the date of the occupation of the building for its permitted use another tree or trees shall be planted at the same time and those trees shall be of such size and species and shall be planted at such time as may be specified by the Council.

Reason: To ensure the continuity of amenity afforded by existing trees.

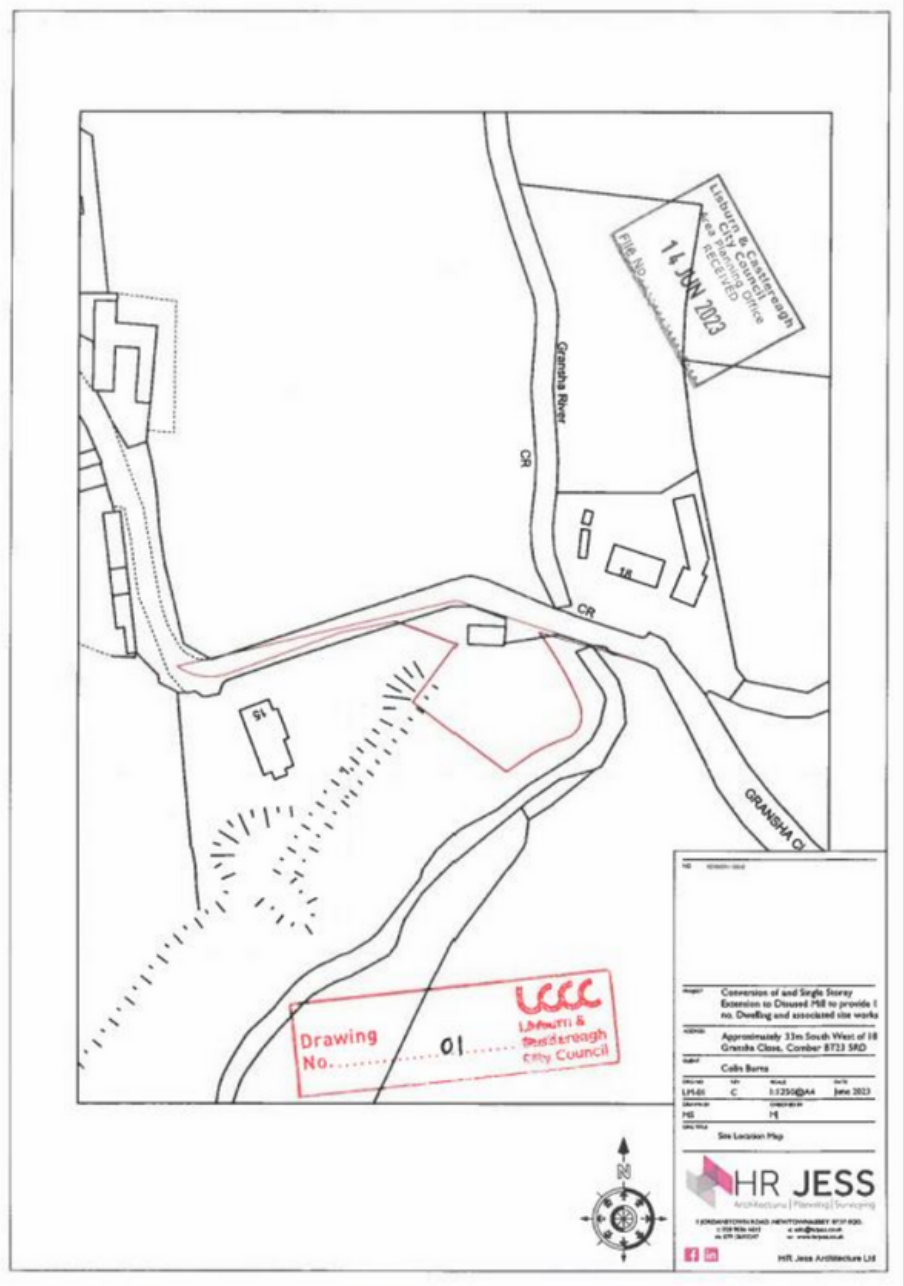
- All hard and soft landscape works shall be carried out in accordance with approved Drawing No. 10a published to the Planning Register on 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2026, and the appropriate British Standard or other recognised Codes of Practice. The works shall be carried out in the first available planting season after occupation of any part of the development hereby approved or in accordance with a programme to be agreed with the Council.

Reason: To ensure the provision, establishment and maintenance of a high standard of landscape for this part of the zoned land is provided in accordance the details of the previous approval.

- If within a period of 5 years from the date of the planting of any tree, shrub or hedge, that tree, shrub or hedge is removed, uprooted or destroyed or dies, or becomes, in the opinion of the Council, seriously damaged or defective, another tree, shrub or hedge of the same species and size as that originally planted shall be planted at the same place, unless the Council gives its written consent to any variation.

Reason: To ensure the provision, establishment and maintenance of a high standard of landscape.

Site Location Plan – LA05/2023/0494/F



## **LISBURN & CASTLEREAGH CITY COUNCIL**

### **Report of a Planning Committee Site Visit held at 3.45 pm on Monday, 20 October, 2025 approximately 33 metres southwest of 18 Gransha Close, Comber**

#### **PRESENT:**

Councillor J Lavery (Acting Chair)

Alderman O Gawith

Councillors P Catney, D J Craig, A Martin and N Trimble

#### **IN ATTENDANCE:**

Head of Planning & Capital Development (CH)

Senior Planning Officer (PMcF)

Member Services Officers (CR and FA)

Apologies for non-attendance were submitted by the Chair, Alderman J Tinsley, Vice-Chair, Councillor G Thompson, Alderman M Gregg and Councillor S Burns.

In the absence of the Chair and Vice-Chair, the meeting was chaired by Councillor J Lavery who had proposed the deferment application LA05/2023/0494/F for a site visit.

This application had been presented for determination at the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 6 October 2025. The Officer's recommendation had been to refuse planning permission given that the application did not meet with policies COU1, COU4 and COU15.

The Head of Planning & Capital Development stated that the purpose of the site visit was for Members to appraise themselves of the building and whether it met the requirements of policy in terms of conversion.

He further advised that, since the officer had last visited the site, it had been cleared and the structure was now more visible and accessible. He cautioned against entering the building from a health and safety perspective as no risk assessment had been carried out and the Members observed how much of the structure remained from various vantage points within the site.

In response to Members' queries, the Head of Planning & Capital Development and the Senior Planning Officer advised that:

- it was understood from correspondence received after the deferral that a Structural Engineers Report was being prepared;
- the first and second ordnance survey records showed a mill race. At some point in time, this building was along that mill race. In the third ordnance survey record, there was doubt over the orientation of the building and whether or not the building had been converted, re-used or significantly altered to turn it into a blacksmiths. The DfC Historic Environment Division had confirmed that the building was of industrial significance and Planning Officers did not dispute that;

- through their observations, Members were required to consider if there was enough information to allow this proposal to be considered as a conversion of a vernacular building.
- At a Member's request, the Head of Planning & Capital Development agreed to provide the planning policy definition of 'vernacular' in any addendum report;
- none of the proposed buildings were in the flood plain and Rivers Agency had confirmed it had no objection to the proposal;
- visibility splays would extend past the wall of the bridge and some vegetation would require to be removed moving up the hill. Further advice would be provided in respect of this matter in any addendum report ; and
- a number of objections had been received. If new information was submitted a further round of neighbour notifications would be required and that would be assessed by officers.

There being no further business, the site visit was terminated at 4.00 pm.

## Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council

| Planning Committee Report |   |
|---------------------------|---|
| Date of Committee         | 06 October 2025   |
| Committee Interest        | Local Application (Called-In)   |
| Application Reference     | LA05/2023/0494/F  |
| Date of Application       | 14 June 2023  |
| District Electoral Area   | Castlereagh East  |
| Proposal Description      | Conversion of and single storey extension to disused mill to provide a dwelling and associated site works |
| Location                  | Approximately 33 metres southwest of 18 Gransha Close, Comber, BT23 5RD                                   |
| Representations           | 12 objections and 1 in support  |
| Case Officer              | Kevin Maguire   |
| Recommendation            | <b>Refusal</b>  |

### Summary of Recommendation

1. This is a local application. It is presented to the Committee for determination in accordance with the Protocol for the Operation of the Committee in that it has been Called In.
2. The application is presented to the Planning Committee with a recommendation to refuse.
3. It is recommended that planning permission is refused as the proposal is contrary to Policy COU1 of the Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council Plan Strategy, in that it is not a type of development which in principle is considered to be acceptable in the countryside.
4. The proposal is contrary to Policy COU4 of the Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council Plan Strategy, in that it is not considered that this proposal would result in a sympathetic conversion of a vernacular building or suitably locally important building for use as a single dwelling where this would secure its upkeep and retention.

5. The proposal is contrary to Policy COU4 of the Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council Plan Strategy, in that it has not been adequately demonstrated that the building is reasonably capable of being made structurally sound or otherwise improved.
6. The proposal is contrary to Policy COU4 (b) of the Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council Plan Strategy, in that it would not maintain or enhance the form, character and architectural features, design and setting of the existing building and would have an adverse effect on the character or appearance of the locality.
7. The proposal is also contrary to Policy COU4 (c) of the Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council Plan Strategy, in that it is not considered the proposed new extension is sympathetic to the scale and massing of the existing building.
8. The proposal is contrary to Policy COU15 (f) of the Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council Plan Strategy, in that it is not considered the design of the building is appropriate for the site and its locality.

### Description of Site and Surroundings

#### Site

9. This site is located approximately 33 metres southwest of No. 18 Gransha Close and incorporates an irregular shaped site approximately 0.13 hectares in size. The site is in a low-lying parcel of land which is mostly flat but rises to the west.
10. On the site is a small roofless structure located close to the road which is linear in plan and is noted visually to be in poor condition. The structure has a mixture of construction materials, including natural stone random rubble, with red/brown brick at various places, including the eastern gable which faces towards the public road.
11. The eastern gable, given the form and outlook is taken to be the 'front' of the structure and includes a large opening. The top section over this opening is supported by a metal beam supporting the remaining brick work above. While there appears to have been some removal of overgrowth in recent years the sides and rear of the structure are still quite overgrown. The interior includes collapsed debris from the structure itself as well as some larger branches from adjacent trees.
12. With regards to the boundaries the application site is undefined to the southwest and southeast, with the latter facing towards the bank of the adjacent Gransha River. The northern boundary faces onto the public road at Gransha

Close and is defined by a low portion of wall associated with the adjacent road bridge, a post and rail fence with a small portion (approximately 5 to 6 metres) and an agricultural type of gate providing access into the site. The northwestern portion of the boundary is defined by a row of mature deciduous trees along the roadside. There is a small roadside verge between the site and the public road.

### **Surroundings**

13. The site is located within the open countryside, and the surrounding lands are predominantly in agricultural in use.
14. No 18 Gransha Road, is a single storey dwelling with several outbuildings, located approximately 28 metres from site on the other side of the road from the application site.
15. No 15 Gransha Road is a 1.5 storey dwelling, located to the southwest being approximately 56 metres away on a higher parcel of land, separated by a large stand of mature and overgrown vegetation.
16. The site is adjacent to the Gransha River to the east. The road passes over a small stone bridge crossing the river immediately to the east.

### **Proposed Development**

17. This is a full application for the conversion of and single storey extension to a discussed mill to provide a dwelling and associated site works.
18. The following documents are submitted in support of this application:
  - Archaeological baseline survey
  - Design and Access Statement
  - Structural Inspection Report (including updated version)
  - Preliminary bat roost assessment
  - Bat survey
  - Biodiversity Checklist
  - Tree Survey Report
  - Flood Risk Assessment

### **Relevant Planning History**

19. There is no relevant planning history associated with the site.

### **Consultations**

20. The following consultations were carried out:

| Consultee                         | Response      |
|-----------------------------------|---------------|
| NIEA Natural Environment Division | No objections |
| NIEA Water Management Unit        | No objections |
| NI Water                          | No objections |
| DfI Roads                         | No objections |
| Shared Environmental Services     | No objections |
| Historic Environment Division     | No objections |
| DfI Rivers                        | No objections |
| Environmental Health              | No objections |

## Representations

21. There have been 12 objections received in relation to this application. The points raised have been summarised below:

- Development is contrary to Policy COU4 and SPPS
- The original building and its purpose will be lost with proposed design.
- The removal of any adjacent trees would likely severely compromise the existing stone walls already in poor condition, which may result in a 'new build' by default.
- Concerns that the stone wall at the bridge will have to be removed to accommodate visibility splays which would have a visual impact.
- Not clear how the application will reduce the ground levels in order to provide the requirements for the visibility splays or affect the bridge.
- There is a blind corner at the entry which would cause significant risk when existing the site.
- Additional traffic generation on narrow road.
- Septic tank is in the floodplain and too close to proposed building.
- The site is located in an area of known flooding through proximity of floodplain and mill race, and construction could push flooding to neighbouring properties.

- Removal of stone wall along bridge would currently also hold back floodwater from road.
- It is questionable whether the applicant is in 'actual possession' of the existing stone wall to the bridge, which is within the application site.
- The existing and proposed floor plans show the same thickness of walls which is misleading as the need for insulation/tanking to meet building regulations will likely make the conversion walls much thicker.
- The provision of a new ground floor at least 150mm above the external ground level in accordance with building regulations and the FRA would compromise available heights at first floor and make plans shown unviable.
- A large number of trees will have to be removed to allow any dwelling to be constructed on the site which will have a visual as well as ecological impact.
- It was requested that trees on the site should be protected.
- There are two retained trees within 5 metres of the building which may cause insurance issues.
- Invasive species have been present and are identified on the site.
- Invasion of privacy of neighbouring dwelling.
- Proposal does not 'protect the established rural pattern' of Gransha Close in terms of spacing of dwellings.
- Potential for building to be used as a short term rental.
- No need for the development in this location.
- Lack of light for proposed development.
- Request has been made to consider additional protection for this structure through the local plan.

22. These issues are considered in greater detail later in the report.

### Local Development Plan

23. Section 6(4) of the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 requires that in making a determination on planning applications, regard must be had to the requirements of the local development plan and that determination must be in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

#### Plan Strategy 2032

24. It is stated at Part 1 of the Plan Strategy that:

*Transitional arrangements will apply in relation to the existing Plan designations. The existing Development Plans which remain in effect for different parts of the Council area are set out in Chapter 2 (Existing Development Plans). Following adoption the Development Plan will be the Plan Strategy and any old Development Plan, with the Plan Strategy having priority in the event of a conflict. Regulation 1 state that the old Development Plans will cease to have effect on adoption of the new LDP at Local Policies Plan (LPP) stage.*

*The Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan (BMAP) was intended to be the Development Plan on its adoption in September 2014. This Plan was subsequently declared unlawful following a successful legal challenge and therefore remains in its entirety un-adopted.*

*BMAP in its post-inquiry form was at an advanced stage and therefore remains a material consideration. Draft BMAP (November 2004) in its pre-inquiry form also remains a material consideration in conjunction with recommendations of the Planning Appeals Commission Public Local Inquiry Reports.*

25. In accordance with the transitional arrangements, the development plan is the Plan Strategy and the BUAP. Draft BMAP remains a material consideration. In accordance with the transitional arrangements, the development plan is the Plan Strategy and the Belfast Urban Area Plan (BUAP). Draft BMAP remains a material consideration.
26. The site is located in the countryside in the BUAP. In the last revision to draft BMAP (2014) this site is located in the open countryside.
27. This application is for new housing in the open countryside. The strategic policy for new housing in the countryside [Strategic Policy 09] states:

*The Plan will support development proposals that:*

- (a) *provide appropriate, sustainable, high quality rural dwellings, whilst protecting rural character and the environment*
- (b) *resist urban sprawl in the open countryside which mars the distinction between the rural area and urban settlements*
- (c) *protect the established rural settlement pattern and allow for vibrant sustainable communities.*

28. The following operational policies in Part 2 of the Plan Strategy also apply.
29. The proposal is for the conversion and reuse of a building for residential use. Policy COU 1 Development in the Countryside states:

*There are a range of types of development which in principle are considered to be acceptable in the countryside and that will contribute to the aims of sustainable development.*

*Details of operational policies relating to acceptable residential development proposals are set out in policies COU2 to COU10.*

*Details of operational policies relating to acceptable non-residential development proposals are set out in policies COU11 - COU14.*

*There are a range of other non-residential development proposals that may in principle be acceptable in the countryside. Such proposals must comply with all policy requirements contained in the operational policies, where relevant to the development.*

*Any proposal for development in the countryside will also be required to meet all of the general criteria set out in Policies COU15 - COU16.*

### **Conversion and Reuse of Buildings for Residential Use**

30. Policy COU4 – The Conversion and Reuse of Buildings for Residential Use states:

*Planning permission will be granted for proposals for the sympathetic conversion, with adaptation if necessary, of a non-listed vernacular building or a suitable locally important building (such as former school houses, churches and older traditional barns and outbuildings) for use as a single dwelling where this would secure its upkeep and retention. Such proposals will be required to be of a high design quality and to meet all of the following criteria:*

- a) the building is of permanent construction*
- b) the conversion or reuse would maintain or enhance the form, character and architectural features, design and setting of the existing building and not have an adverse effect on the character or appearance of the locality*
- c) any new extensions are sympathetic to the scale, massing and architectural style and finishes of the existing building*
- d) the conversion or reuse would not unduly affect the amenities of nearby residents or adversely affect the continued agricultural use of adjoining land or buildings*
- e) the nature and scale of the use is demonstrated to be appropriate to a countryside location.*

*Buildings of a temporary construction such as those designed and used for agricultural purposes, including sheds or stores will not be eligible for conversion or reuse under this policy.*

*Exceptionally, consideration may be given to the sympathetic conversion or reuse of a traditional non-residential building to provide more than one dwelling where the building is of sufficient size; the scheme of conversion involves minimal intervention; and the overall scale of the proposal and intensity of use is considered appropriate to the locality.*

*In all cases evidence of a building's condition must demonstrate that it is reasonably capable of being made structurally sound or otherwise improved.*

*A former dwelling previously replaced and retained as an ancillary building, or where it was conditioned for demolition but has subsequently become immune from enforcement action, will not be eligible for conversion back into residential use under this policy.*

Integration and Design of Buildings in the Countryside

## 31. Policy COU15 - Integration and Design of Buildings in the Countryside states:

*In all circumstances proposals for development in the countryside must be in accordance with and sited and designed to integrate sympathetically with their surroundings and of an appropriate design.*

*A new building will not be permitted if any of the following apply:*

- a) *it is a prominent feature in the landscape*
- b) *it is not sited to cluster with an established group of buildings*
- c) *it fails to blend with the landform, existing trees, buildings, slopes and other natural features which provide a backdrop*
- d) *the site lacks long established natural boundaries or is unable to provide a suitable degree of enclosure for the building to integrate into the landscape*
- e) *it relies primarily on the use of new landscaping for integration*
- f) *the design of the building is inappropriate for the site and its locality*
- g) *ancillary works do not integrate with their surroundings.*

Rural Character and other Criteria

## 32. Policy COU16 – Rural Character and other Criteria states:

*In all circumstances proposals for development in the countryside must be in accordance with and must not cause a detrimental change to, or further erode the rural character of an area.*

*A new development proposal will be unacceptable where:*

- a) *it is unduly prominent in the landscape*
- b) *it is not sited to cluster with an established group of buildings*
- c) *it does not respect the traditional pattern of settlement exhibited in that area*
- d) *it mars the distinction between a settlement and the surrounding countryside, or otherwise results in urban sprawl*
- e) *it has an adverse impact on the rural character of the area*
- f) *it would adversely impact on residential amenity*
- g) *all necessary services, including the provision of non mains sewerage, are not available or cannot be provided without significant adverse impact on the environment or character of the locality*
- h) *the impact of ancillary works (with the exception of necessary visibility splays) would have an adverse impact on rural character*
- i) *access to the public road cannot be achieved without prejudice to road safety or significantly inconveniencing the flow of traffic.*

**Habitats, Species or Features of Natural Heritage Importance**

33. As the existing building is being converted, and the site is adjacent to a watercourse and area of overgrown vegetation, consideration is given to the potential for an adverse impact or damage to be caused to designated/protected sites and priority/protected species and habitats.
34. Supporting ecological reports are submitted with the application including a bat roost assessment, bat survey, ecological appraisal for badgers and Biodiversity Checklist including preliminary ecological assessment (PEA).
35. Policies NH2 Species Protected by Law advises that for European Protected Species:

*Planning permission will only be granted for a development proposal that is not likely to harm a European protected species.*

*In exceptional circumstances a development proposal that is likely to harm these species may only be permitted where:*

- a) there are no alternative solutions; and*
- b) it is required for imperative reasons of overriding public interest; and*
- c) there is no detriment to the maintenance of the population of the species at a favourable conservation status; and*
- d) compensatory measures are agreed and fully secured.*

In the case of nationally protected species it is noted that:

*Planning permission will only be granted for a development proposal that is not likely to harm any other statutorily protected species and which can be adequately mitigated or compensated against. Development proposals are required to be sensitive to all protected species, and sited and designed to protect them, their habitats and prevent deterioration and destruction of their breeding sites or resting places. Seasonal factors will also be taken into account.*

36. It is stated at policy NH5 Habitats, Species or Features of Natural Heritage Importance that:

*Planning permission will only be granted for a development proposal which is not likely to result in the unacceptable adverse impact on, or damage to known:*

- a) priority habitats b) priority species c) active peatland d) ancient and long-established woodland e) features of earth science conservation importance f) features of the landscape which are of major importance for wild flora and fauna g) rare or threatened native species h) wetlands (includes river corridors) i) other natural heritage features worthy of protection.*

*A development proposal which is likely to result in an unacceptable adverse impact on, or damage to, habitats, species or features listed above may only be permitted where the benefits of the proposed development outweigh the value of the habitat, species or feature. In such cases, appropriate mitigation and/or compensatory measures will be required.*

## Waste Management

37. A private package treatment plant is proposed and Policy WM 2 - Treatment of Wastewater states:

*Development proposals to provide mains sewage Wastewater Treatment Works (WwTWs) will be permitted where it is demonstrated to the Council there is a need for new or extended capacity requirements, and the new facilities comply with the requirements of Policy WM1.*

*Development relying on non mains sewage treatment will only be permitted where it is demonstrated to the Council and its statutory consultees that there is sufficient capacity to discharge treated effluent to a watercourse and that this will not create or add to a pollution problem or create or add to flood risk.*

## Access and Transport

38. The proposal involves the alteration of an existing access to the public road. Policy TRA2 – Access to Public Roads states:

*Planning permission will only be granted for a development proposal involving direct access, or the intensification of the use of an existing access, onto a public road where:*

- a) *it will not prejudice road safety or significantly inconvenience the flow of vehicles; and,*
- b) *it does not conflict with Policy TRA3 Access to Protected Routes.*

*Consideration will also be given to the nature and scale of the development, character of existing development, the contribution of the proposal to the creation of a quality environment, the location and number of existing accesses and the standard of the existing road network together with the speed and volume of traffic using the adjacent public road and any expected increase.*

39. The justification and amplification states:

*For development proposals involving a replacement dwelling in the countryside, where an existing access is available but does not meet the current standards, the Council would encourage the incorporation of improvements to the access in the interests of road safety.*

## Flooding

40. The site is adjacent to a designated watercourse. Policy FLD1 relates to development in Fluvial (River) Flood Plains and states that:

*New development will not be permitted within the 1 in 100-year fluvial flood plain (AEP of 1%) plus the latest mapped climate change allowance, unless*

*the applicant can demonstrate that the proposal constitutes an exception to the policy in the following cases:*

#### *Exceptions in Defended Areas*

*On previously developed land protected by flood defences (confirmed by DfI Rivers as structurally adequate) in a 1 in 100 year plus climate change allowance fluvial flood event.*

*Proposals that fall into any of the following categories will not be permitted by this exception:*

- a) essential infrastructure such as power supply and emergency services*
- b) development for the storage of hazardous substances*
- c) bespoke development for vulnerable groups, such as schools, residential/nursing homes, sheltered housing*
- d) any development located close to flood defences.*

*Proposals involving significant intensification of use will be considered on their individual merits and will be informed by a Flood Risk Assessment.*

#### *Exceptions in Undefined Areas*

*The following categories of development will be permitted by exception:*

- a) replacement of an existing building*
- b) development for agricultural use, transport and utilities infrastructure, which for operational reasons has to be located within the flood plain*
- c) water compatible development, such as for boating purposes, navigation and water based recreational use, which for operational reasons has to be located in the flood plain*
- d) the use of land for sport or outdoor recreation, amenity open space or for nature conservation purposes, including ancillary buildings. This exception does not include playgrounds for children*
- e) the extraction of mineral deposits and necessary ancillary development.*

*Proposals that fall into any of the following categories will not be permitted by this exception:*

- a) bespoke development for vulnerable groups, such as schools, residential/nursing homes, sheltered housing*
- b) essential infrastructure*
- c) development for the storage of hazardous substances.*

#### *Development Proposals of Overriding Regional or Sub-Regional Economic Importance*

*A development proposal within the flood plain that does not constitute an exception to the policy may be permitted where it is deemed to be of overriding regional or sub-regional economic importance and meets both of the following criteria:*

- a) demonstration of exceptional benefit to the regional or sub-regional economy*
- b) demonstration that the proposal requires a location within the flood plain and justification of why possible alternative sites outside the flood plain are unsuitable.*

*Where the principle of development is established through meeting the above criteria, the Council will steer the development to those sites at lowest flood risk.*

#### *Minor Development*

*Minor development will be acceptable within defended and undefended flood plains subject to a satisfactory flood risk assessment.*

*Where the principle of development is accepted by the Council through meeting any of the above 'Exceptions Tests', the applicant is required to submit a Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) to demonstrate that all sources of flood risk to and from the proposed development have been identified; and there are adequate measures to manage and mitigate any increase in flood risk arising from the development.*

#### *Flood Protection/Management Measures*

*In flood plains the following flood protection and management measures proposed as part of a planning application, unless carried out by DfI Rivers or other statutory body, will not be acceptable:*

- a) new hard engineered or earthen bank flood defences*
- b) flood compensation storage works*
- c) land raising (infilling) to elevate a site above the flood level within the undefended fluvial flood plain.*

### **Historic Environment and Archaeology**

41. Policy HE2 The Preservation of Archaeological Remains of Local Importance and their Settings states that:

*Proposals which would adversely affect archaeological sites or monuments which are of local importance or their settings shall only be permitted where the Council considers that the need for the proposed development or other material considerations outweigh the value of the remains and/or their settings.*

42. Policy HE4 Archaeological Mitigation states that:

*Where the Council is minded to grant planning permission for development which will affect sites known or likely to contain archaeological remains, the Council will impose planning conditions to ensure that appropriate measures are taken for the identification and mitigation of the archaeological impacts of*

*the development, including where appropriate completion of a licensed excavation and recording examination and archiving of remains before development commences or the preservation of remains in situ.*

## Regional Policy and Guidance

### Regional Policy

43. The SPPS was published in September 2015. It is the most recent planning policy, and it is stated at paragraph 1.5 that:

*The provisions of the SPPS apply to the whole of Northern Ireland. They must be taken into account in the preparation of Local Development Plans (LDP) and are material to all decisions on individual planning applications and appeals.*

44. Paragraph 3.8 of the SPPS states:

*that the guiding principle for planning authorities in determining planning applications is that sustainable development should be permitted, having regard to the development plan and all other material considerations, unless the proposed development will cause demonstrable harm to interest of acknowledged importance.*

45. This proposal is for a conversion and extension of an existing stone structure to a dwelling. Bullet point two of paragraph 6.73 of the SPPS states that:

*provision should be made for the sympathetic conversion and re-use, with adaptation, if necessary, of a locally important building (such as former school houses, churches and older traditional barns and outbuildings), as a single dwelling where this would secure its upkeep and retention. Provision should also be made for the conversion of a locally important building to provide more than one dwelling where the building is of sufficient size, the conversion involves minimal intervention; and the intensity of the use is considered appropriate to the locality. A former dwelling previously replaced and retained as an ancillary building to the new replacement dwelling will not be eligible for conversion back into residential use under this policy.*

46. It is further stated at paragraph 6.78 of the SPPS that:

*supplementary planning guidance contained within Building on Tradition: A Sustainable Design Guide for the Northern Ireland Countryside must be taken into account in assessing all development proposals in the countryside.*

**Retained Regional Guidance**

47. Whilst not policy, the following guidance document remains a material consideration:

**Building on Tradition**

48. Paragraph 3.1.0 of Building on Tradition states that the previous planning policy (PPS21) placed:

*a significant emphasis on the role that our historic building stock can play in meeting the needs of the community and also in achieving sustainable development. Older buildings are not only part of our heritage, but considerable energy is also embodied in the building material used in their construction. The energy requirement for their reuse and refurbishment is considerably less than that for replacement. So, the sustainability principle of reduce, reuse, recycle applies to our building stock just as much as it does to every other aspect of resource consumption.*

49. At paragraph 3.1.1, further notes that:

*there is considerable potential to convert and reuse former schools, churches, mills, and farm buildings bringing new life to many beautiful and outstanding historic buildings that presently lie empty. This is a key aspect of the sustainability strategy for the countryside - nurturing our built heritage, bringing empty and redundant buildings into use and conserving the best of our traditional buildings.*

50. At paragraph 3.2.1 notes that:

In design terms, the sympathetic conversion of a suitable building for a variety of alternative uses is considered acceptable where

- reuse or conversion would maintain or enhance the form, character or architectural features, design and setting of the existing building and
- new extensions are sympathetic to the scale, massing and architectural style and finishes of the existing building.

51. Paragraph 3.3.1 further clarifies that:

*'The essential characteristics of vernacular buildings (relating to simplicity of form, proportion, solid and simple construction) are set out'...in policy. It notes that 'Rural vernacular or traditional architecture is defined as the construction of small plain buildings in the countryside (particularly before 1925) where the dominant influence in siting, materials, form and design is the local 'folk tradition'. Such vernacular buildings will have been typical, i.e., of a common type in any given locality and will lack the individualistic and 'educated' design features that characterised international fashions in formal architecture during the same period'.*

52. Paragraph 3.3.2 notes that:

*'The retention and sympathetic refurbishment of non-listed vernacular structures is encouraged, particularly where they make an important contribution to the heritage, appearance or character of the locality.*

*Aspects of the setting of these buildings, including hedgerows, trees, boundary walls and existing access arrangements are also integral to the contribution these buildings make to the character and appearance of local landscapes. Preserving and maintaining the physical setting of such sites is therefore an important design consideration. There are many good examples which demonstrate how to keep and integrate these building into exciting and innovative new projects....'*

53. In addition to listing the advantages of re-use Paragraph 3.5.0 notes that the previous policies for replacement dwellings and conversions:

*encourages the sympathetic conversion, with adaptation, if necessary, of suitable buildings where this would secure upkeep and retention. Specifically for listed buildings but also favourable and were deemed appropriate for vernacular structures, this process will involve conservation and managing change so that their character and special interest is maintained. Applicants should have regard to the following principles of conservation:*

- *Minimum Intervention*
- *Maximum retention of fabric*
- *Reversibility*
- *Legibility*

54. Paragraph 3.7.0 to 3.7.2 states that:

*'Maintaining and enhancing building form, character and architectural features is a central concern of Policy CTY 4. The policy requires a design approach that respects and reinforces the signature characteristics and architectural traditions of the area.*

*This is achieved through restoration and repair of the existing structure and through the blending in of new buildings or extensions. Rather than proposals for new additions that copy the existing historic architectural style, any new element should blend with the existing structures and landscape setting by having regard to the following qualities:*

- *Context, including landscape setting*
- *Appropriate siting*
- *Appropriate height and massing*
- *Compatible scale*
- *Good proportion overall and also in its elements and details*
- *Choice of materials and colours should*

- complement the surrounding context

*The extension should be designed to become an integral part of the property both functionally and visually, well-proportioned and in balance with the shape of the existing property. The height, width and general size of an extension should be integrated so as not to dominate the character of the existing structure’.*

55. With regards to wastewater treatment, Building on Tradition [page 131] states that:

*If Consent for Discharge has been granted under the Water (Northern Ireland) Order 1999 for the proposed development site, a copy of this should be submitted to accompany the planning application. This is required to discharge any trade or sewage effluent or any other potentially polluting matter from commercial, industrial or domestic premises to waterways or underground strata. In other cases, applications involving the use of non-mains sewerage, including outline applications, will be required to provide sufficient information about how it is intended to treat effluent from the development so that this matter can be properly assessed. This will normally include information about ground conditions, including the soil and groundwater characteristics, together with details of adjoining developments existing or approved. Where the proposal involves an on-site sewage treatment plant, such as a septic tank or a package treatment plant, the application will also need to be accompanied by drawings that accurately show the proposed location of the installation and soakaway, and of drainage ditches and watercourses in the immediate vicinity. The site for the proposed apparatus should be located on land within the application site or otherwise within the applicant’s control and therefore subject to any planning conditions relating to the development of the site.*

56. In this particular case the DfC publication ‘Historic Buildings of Local Importance – A guide to their identification and protection’, which has been noted under Policy COU4 in the LCCC Plan Strategy, would also be relevant to consider. It notes that ‘*the significance placed on the historic building of local importance is key to its protection under planning policy*’. It notes in one of the examples provided that ‘*some buildings, even if in poor condition, may be important to a community*’.

## Assessment

### The Conversion and Reuse of Buildings for Residential Use

57. Policy COU4 of the LCCC Planning Strategy notes that planning permission will be granted for the sympathetic conversion, with adaptation, if necessary, of a non-listed vernacular building or a suitable locally important building (such as

former schoolhouses, churches and older traditional barns and outbuildings) for use as a single dwelling where this would secure its upkeep and retention.

58. Under this policy 'Vernacular Buildings' are those that reflect the local 'folk tradition' and are typical of a common type of building in a particular locality, generally pre-1925. For the purposes of this policy a 'Locally Important Building' is a building, structure or feature, whilst not statutory listed, has been identified by the Council as an important part of their heritage, due to its local architectural or historic significance. On this latter point concerning locally important buildings, such sites would be identified by Councils through their local development plan process. In the case of LCCC no locally important buildings or features have yet been identified within the Council area through this process.
59. It is noted from the archaeological baseline survey that 8 sites of industrial heritage are located within 500 metres of the site, and these are predominantly linked with mills arranged along the line of the Gransha River. This building could potentially be pre-1925 as a structure at this location is shown on the first edition map. It is not listed and in poor condition, including no roof, partially collapsed walls with more recent interventions to support the outer walls with the inclusion/addition/fixing of brick work and the metal supporting beam above the opening in the eastern gable.
60. There is also considerable overgrown vegetation within the building and along its walls with no substantive visual evidence to confirm that the remaining structure on site relates to what it is claimed to be constructed for i.e. a flax mill. The archaeological baseline survey noted:  
  
*'no sign of a wheel pit could be discerned, or of any fittings relating to use either as a mill or as a smithy, but these could easily be concealed by the rubble and growth of vegetation'.*
61. The archaeological report notes that:  
  
*'the 1st edition OS mapping is the earliest to show the proposed development location in reliable detail and shows the proposed development site sitting at the end of a long mill race, with an eastwards running sluice feeding back into the Gransha River in the general vicinity of the southern site boundary'.*
62. However, the report also raises some doubt when it notes the 3<sup>rd</sup> edition map (1901), where there is a small discrepancy in the building location and alignment between the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> edition maps and it is:  
  
*'unclear whether this marks a demolition of the mill and the rebuild of a reorientated smithy, or inaccuracy of mapping on the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition with both editions marking the same building'.*
63. In addition, the report states that:

*'the 1919 map shows that the building 'has a smaller footprint again than the 1901 plan suggesting a possible reuse/reworking of the upstanding remains'.*

64. This, in addition to the lack of visual evidence of fittings relating to use either as a mill or as a blacksmith, would raise concerns over how much of the remaining structure relates to any former use.
65. Historic Environment Division were consulted on the submission of the archaeological report and confirm that the site contains a feature of archaeological interest, a flax mill recorded on the Department's Industrial Heritage Record (IHR 02740), and as a site of local archaeological importance would be protected under Policy HE2 of the Plan Strategy.
66. Overall HED have welcomed the plans for retention and reuse of the purported surviving mill building as part of the scheme however the structure remains unlisted and has not been scheduled.
67. It is accepted based on the evidence submitted there was a flax mill on site, which may have been in addition to the building on site or was used as a blacksmith at a later stage. On balance however, given the poor condition of the structure and its lack of remaining visual features relating to its purported use as a flax mill it is not considered that this proposal would result in a sympathetic conversion of a vernacular building for use as a single dwelling where this would secure its upkeep and retention. The condition and deterioration of the structure is such that it has lost any distinctive features that would link the structure to the flax industry.
68. Notwithstanding the views expressed above, the policy also requires that such proposals, if considered acceptable, must also be required to be of a high design quality and to meet a number of criteria.
69. The first of these criteria is that the building is of permanent construction. Based on what is currently on the ground and including other sources such as the archaeological information received and response from HED it is clear that the remains of the building has been there for a long period of time and is not of temporary construction, therefore it is considered to meet Criterion a).
70. Criterion b) requires that the conversion or reuse would maintain or enhance the form, character and architectural features, design and setting of the existing building and not have an adverse effect on the character or appearance of the locality. The information received shows that the development proposes to utilise the existing building footprint and the existing stonework, with the section brickwork indicated to be replaced.
71. The large opening to the eastern gable would be glazed, with minimal additional openings on the ground floor and roof lights above to mezzanine. The application was submitted with existing plans including elevations showing the existing condition of the building. This drawing also indicates an extrapolated line showing the height of the pitch where the building was likely to

reach. While the proposals would maintain the footprint of the existing structure, based on the current structure on the ground it is not clear that the proposed ridge height would be in keeping with the form of the previous building on site and would be substantially larger than the current structure given its condition and inclusion of more recent interventions including brick and metal beam at the apex of the former building.

72. Regarding the setting as noted the proposal involves an extension to the existing structure. This extension is significantly larger than the original structure and given views of the site and structure when travelling in a westerly direction along Gransha Close, it is considered that this proposed extension would adversely impact the setting of what currently remains on the site and the local character of the area. Based on these considerations it is contended that the application as submitted with the interventions required and extension proposed would not adequately satisfy the requirements of Criterion b) of Policy COU4.
73. Criterion c) has partly been covered in the paragraph above. In terms of scale and massing, the proposed extension is to provide additional living space which would more than double the overall footprint of the existing structure. It is considered that, in the context of the clear views of the site when travelling along Gransha Close, this extension would not be sympathetic to the scale and massing of the remaining structure on site. In this respect that proposals would be contrary to Criterion c) of Policy COU4.
74. In relation to Criterion d) it is noted that the existing building to be converted is approximately 27 metres from the corner of No 18 which is the closest dwelling on the other side of the road. While the proposed eastern gable facing the road is predominantly glazed and would face in the general direction of the neighbours dwelling, the distance and its orientation towards the front of the dwelling would limit the potential adverse impacts on amenity including overlooking.
75. There is amenity space at a closer distance however this is adjacent to the public road already with the private amenity area set further back to the side and rear of No 18. Given the low-lying nature of the two properties, separation distance and scale, overshadowing is not a significant issue in this instance.
76. The site is also close to No 15 to the west, which is at a higher site level than the proposal however the separation distance to the proposed dwelling is approximately 50 metres. Number 15 has a large rear garden which stretches down to the boundary with the proposal. The two sites divided by a thick area of mature trees and other planting. The site plan as submitted shows some trees will need to be removed to accommodate the proposal however the majority will remain and these remaining trees along with additional new tree and hedge planting provide an adequate buffer between the two sites. Based on the distance, existing landscaping and design it is not considered that there will be significant adverse amenity impacts.

77. Finally, Criterion e) relates to whether the nature and scale of the use is demonstrated to be appropriate to a countryside location. The local area is rural but is characterised by scattered residential units and a number of single dwellings and farm complexes are located in close proximity to the site. Based on this the nature and scale of the use outlined within this proposal is not likely to be inappropriate to this location.
78. Additionally, the policy requires that in all cases evidence of a building's condition must demonstrate that it is reasonably capable of being made structurally sound or otherwise improved.
79. The application was submitted with a Visual Structural Inspection report. The report details how the existing structure could be stabilised and brought back into use:
- **Paragraph 4.1 & 4.2:** *Although the building is in an advanced state of disrepair with significant overgrowth, where there are remaining walls, they would appear generally to be in good condition, however, to fully appreciate the current condition the site would need to be cleared of vegetation and rubble.*
  - **Paragraph 4.4:** *There will be localised elements of structure which will need to be taken down and rebuilt as required, some due to the precarious condition which poses a health and safety risk to anyone working in the vicinity.*
  - **Paragraph 4.7:** *Buildings of this vintage are unlikely to contain foundations with the walls built directly off large foundation stones at or near ground level. Also the floors may have been earthenware floors or minimal concrete screeds. This should be considered when forming new ground floor slabs as modern floor build-up will be deeper with the risk of undermining the existing walls during installation.*
80. Having regard to the matters raised a partial or full removal and rebuild of the existing walls of the property would not be consistent with the aims and thrust of the policy and would essentially result in a new build, potentially using the building materials of the previous structure on site.
81. Further clarification was requested on the Applicants behalf in relation to this point.
82. An amended visual structural report was provided by the applicant and while similar it made some changes to a number of the points in the original report, namely the following (amendments highlighted in bold and underlined):
- **Paragraph 4.4:** *There will be localised elements of structure where consideration should be given to dismantling and repairing as required, due to the precarious condition which poses a health and safety risk to anyone working in the vicinity. An example of this would be a small area of facing brick to the left hand side of the main opening, which will require*

**propping whilst the broken bricks are repaired. Large scale removal or rebuild of the existing stone and brick walls is not necessary.**

- **Paragraph 4.7:** *Buildings of this vintage are unlikely to contain **modern concrete strip foundations** with the walls built directly off large foundation stones at or near ground level. Also the floors may have been earthenware floors or minimal concrete screeds. A new foundation and floor should be installed no deeper than the existing base stones to maintain structural integrity.*
83. While the amended text within the structural report suggests that the walls as constructed would not need to be fully removed and gives an example of the level of intervention needed, there would still be a concern that this has been clearly noted as a 'visual structural assessment' with 'no opening up' carried out. The amended plan again notes that the site would need to be initially cleared of vegetation and rubble to fully appreciate the current condition (see underlined text). In relation to the removal of clay bricks, there are a number of areas, some quite low down in the side walls, where brick may need to be removed, with the impact of this removal unknown based on the information submitted. On this basis there are remaining concerns regarding the structural integrity of the remaining building and the level of intervention that would be needed to successfully convert into the proposed dwelling.
  84. In order to better understand the risks associated with utilising the existing structure the Council independently reviewed the structural assessments submitted to date. This review noted that again any meaningful assessment could not be made without the removal of extensive vegetation currently on the structure. It has further stated that the possibility exists that the process of removing this vegetation could cause damage to the walls if it has become implanted in the fabric.
  85. With regards to the new foundations the assessment advises that the new foundation could potentially lead to collapse of the random rubble walls, and this operation will require the walls to be underpinned. While it is noted that the walls can be treated to make them more robust these types of walls are 'unforgiving' and no further detail has been provided in the second structural assessment to indicate how the new foundations will be installed while ensuring the random rubble walls 'remain sound'. The review further highlights how the survey does not provide clarification on whether the new floor slab 'with insulation and screed' will require the underside of the floor to be dropped below the level of the wall base stones, which also has the potential for further destabilisation.
  86. The review does note that aside from the points raised above, the proposal would result in minimal change to the existing building, with additional loads not significant for such a structure and removal of timber heads can be achieved safely with careful propping. Notwithstanding these points, the initial concerns regarding the extent of vegetation penetration and issues associated with its removal and potential impact on foundations, as well as the absence of information within the submitted structural assessment to address these points,

it is considered that the proposal as submitted has not demonstrated that the building's condition is reasonably capable of being made structurally sound or otherwise improved.

#### Integration and Design of Buildings in the Countryside

87. Taking into account the topography, as well as existing and proposed vegetation, the relatively short-range views from the winding nature of Gransha Close at this location, it is considered that the proposed dwelling within this site would not create a prominent feature within the local landscape. Criteria (a) is capable of being met.
88. The detail provided indicates that the proposed dwelling will partly comprise of the structure on site. In addition, the site is close to existing dwellings at No 15 and 18 to the west and east of the site respectively. For this reason, it is considered to be sited with the established buildings. Criteria (b) is met.
89. With regard to criteria (c), the development is sited so as to blend into the landscape using the existing band of mature landscaping along the western boundary in particular which is proposed to be retained and would provide a backdrop for the proposed dwelling. On this basis the proposal would comply with Criterion (c).
90. While not all the boundaries of the site are currently defined, the proposed vegetation and remaining trees along the western boundaries of the site in particular, together with the location of the proposed dwelling in a natural hollow between the higher areas of ground to the east and west, would on balance provide a suitable degree of enclosure for the proposed dwelling. New trees are proposed however the development would not rely on these to provide enclosure. For these reasons, criteria (d) and (e) are on balance capable of being met.
91. The overall proposed dwelling would not be in keeping with the scale and form of the existing building on site which it proposes to utilise as part of this proposal. The existing building is a single storey stone structure which appears to have encompassed a pitched roof and is well integrated into the local landscape. The proposed extension, with a footprint which would more than double the size of the of the existing building on site, is also single storey pitched roof with materials which would not be incongruous with the existing building and local landscape. Both elements are linear in form. The scale of the extension as previously noted is inappropriate when attached to the existing structure on site, as noted in Policy COU4. On that basis the design of the building would be inappropriate on this site and this specific locality. Overall, it is considered that criteria (f) is not met.
92. The ancillary works comprise a new access required to achieve better visibility. Due to the nature of the site in respect of its topography it is considered that the required ancillary works required would be minimal. Some trees along the frontage of the site will need to be removed to provide visibility splays at the

access however the plans have indicated the provision of a hawthorn hedge behind the splays and given the lower level of the building of the site in comparison of the rising carriageway it is considered acceptable. All the other ancillary works associated with the installation of a septic tank underground and connecting to existing overhead utilities would be minimal. Criteria (g) is capable of being met.

### Rural Character

93. The proposed dwelling would be sited so as not to be prominent in the landscape, and it can be sited to cluster with an established group of buildings in relation to the building being converted and the existing dwellings close to the site. These matters are dealt with in the preceding section and for the same reasons criteria (a) and (b) of Policy COU16 are met.
94. The proposed dwelling incorporates the conversion of an existing stone and brick structure with a new extension proposed to the side and rear of this existing building. This proposal, given the presence of the existing structure, would not adversely impact the established pattern of settlement in the area and therefore the requirement of criteria (c) is met.
95. This site is not adjacent to any settlement development limit which would mar the distinction between a settlement and the surrounding countryside and as the existing building being replaced is largely in situ it does not result in urban sprawl. Furthermore, the dwelling sited, designed and oriented to ensure that no adverse impact on residential amenity or rural character would be likely. Criteria (d), (e) and (f) are considered to be met.
96. From the consultations undertaken there is no reason why all the necessary services cannot be provided. As per applications of this kind (single dwelling) NIEA Water Management Unit have referred to standing advice and through this have raised no objections. NI Water have indicated that there is a watermain within 20 metres from the site boundary. Other services such as provision of electricity would be applied for separately. In that respect it is not considered that based on the consultation responses received the provision of these services would result in impact on the environment or character of the locality.
97. Criteria h) and i) both relate to roads and the provision of access to the site. As with Criterion g) of Policy COU15 a small amount of vegetation will have to be removed for visibility splays, and this will be compensated by new planting including a variety of different species and hawthorn hedging. The road safety of the proposed access will be considered in more detail of this report but it is contended following consultation with DfI Roads the proposal would adequately meet Criterion i) of Policy COU16.

### **Policy WM2 - Waste Management**

98. The application submit proposes that surface water and foul sewage will be disposed of through a soakaway and septic tank respectively. With regards to

the septic tank in particular Environmental Health and Water Management Unit were consulted and offer no objections in principle subject to it being sited as generally indicated in the plans with suitable levels and adequate area of subsoil irrigation for the disposal of effluent.

99. Advice from Water Management Unit refers to standing advice and explains that the onus is on the applicant to ensure that all other regulatory consents are in place.
100. Consideration of flood risk is included as a criterion for assessment in Policy WM 2. This issue will be dealt with later in this report however in summary a Flood Risk Assessment has been submitted which DfI Rivers have been consulted on and are now content.
101. On the basis of the above it is considered that the proposal would meet this policy.

### **Access and Transport**

102. The proposal seeks permission for the conversion of an existing non-residential building with the creation of a new access for both vehicular and pedestrian use. The application form notes an alteration to an existing access however this relates to an agricultural access and while this access point may be utilised it will essentially result in a new access with visibility splays of 42 metres in each direction.
103. DfI Roads have been consulted and following the submission of amended plans showing the visibility splays and they have offered no objection subject to standard conditions including the proposal is to be built in accordance with the visibility splays and forward site distance and the parking is as shown on the submitted plans.
104. Taking the above into account it is considered that the development as proposed satisfies the policy requirements of Policy TRA2 in that the access will not prejudice road safety or significantly inconvenience the flow of vehicles.

### **Flooding**

105. The application site is located a short distance from Ballystockart River to the south and east and DfI Rivers initial response has confirmed that the site lies in the 1 in 100-year strategic flood plain. It was requested that the applicant undertake a Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) that would verify the more accurate extent of the flood plain and require a river model.
106. In accordance with Policy FLD1 the development will only be suitable to that part of the site which is found to be outside the determined flood plain. The policy notes that there are exceptions for development within the floodplain, including the use of land for amenity space.

107. The FRA shows a plan indicating the estimated 1% AEP (2080) Floodplain extents and indicates that the proposed dwelling would be sitting outside of the area in this floodplain and within the application site relating to make up the eastern and southern part of the site and relate to amenity space.

108. In relation to freeboard the FRA notes that:

*'for design purposes it is usually recommended that the finished floor level of all buildings, roads, as well as any vulnerable infrastructure such as electrics, tank cover levels, etc. be located 600mm above the 1%AEP (2028) flood levels. Typically, the 600mm freeboard on finished floor levels is normally to ensure that even with further climate change causing increasing river flows. However, with the higher flood level as a result of a 67% bridge blockage JKB Consulting recommends a minimum freeboard of 600mm should be applied to the 1% AEP (2080) plus 67% bridge blockage Flood Levels. The recommended finished floor level is 52.20mOD'.*

109. On a later site plan the finished floor level was not shown however the closest datum point shown to the building is '51.11' which would be over a metre less than what has been recommended. It is noted that this relates to an existing building already on site. However, from site visit it was noted that the ground within the existing structure to be converted is slightly lower than the surrounding land and the finished floor level within the building should be brought up to the level as stipulated in the FRA. Following further clarification with the agent a finished floor level of 52.2 has now been included on the most up-to-date site plan.

110. DfI Rivers were consulted on the FRA responding that the site lies in a 1 in 100-year fluvial flood plain and the Planning Authority have to deem that the proposal would have to meet one of the exception tests as per Policy FLD1. The Council requested further information on this point from the applicant.

111. Further information was received advising their view that the development fell under Exception d) Exceptions in Undefended Areas 'in that the development relates to:

*'the use of land for sport or outdoor recreation, amenity open space or for nature conservation purposes, including ancillary buildings'.*

112. The applicant also notes that there is 'no development proposed in the flood plain for this development only the garden amenity area which is ancillary to the building'.

113. It has been noted from plans and the FRA that the buildings are outside of the identified 1 in 100-year flood area, with only the front/side amenity space at potential risk of flooding under the defined 1 in 100-year area. Based on this it is accepted that the development would on balance fall within that policy exception.

114. A further consultation response was received from DfI Rivers which noted that while the FRA provided an extent of the floodplain, an updated site layout has been provided which showed a turning head to be constructed within the Q100CC fluvial flood plain. This plan was subsequently amended to remove the turning head however DfI Rivers subsequently noted the applicant was requested to further amend the plan to include the finished floor levels to show that recommendation detailed in Section 7.3 of the Flood Risk Assessment. A finished floor level of 52.2mOD has been incorporated into the design of the proposed development. The applicant subsequently updated this plan to show the FFL associated with the proposed dwelling this is at 52.2 as per DfI Rivers comments.
115. On balance the application would meet the requirements within policy FLD1 in the LCCC Local Development Plan Strategy.

### Natural Heritage

116. The application was submitted with a Biodiversity Checklist and Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment. The Biodiversity Checklist, which included an Ecological Statement, identified priority habitats which included existing native and semi-native plant species within the site. In relation to protected species the statement assessed badgers, otters, common lizard, smooth newt, red squirrel, birds, bats and invasive plant species.
117. A badger sett was found during survey but was well outside the 25-metre buffer required, with the application submitting a preliminary ecological appraisal for badgers, however the development would therefore not adversely impact this. There was no evidence of otters, common lizards or smooth newts within the site during the survey. Sixteen common bird species were recorded on the site or within 50 metres. On bats the statement noted that the site is assessed as low foraging potential and while trees are to be removed these are generally too small to have bat roost features, with all trees assessed having negligible bat roost potential, however it states that a preliminary bat roost assessment is required.
118. A preliminary bat roost assessment was submitted with the application and the results show that in relation to trees these are generally small and mid-sized with no potential bat roost features and are therefore assessed as having negligible bat roost potential. With regards to the structure on site, it notes that *'this is the ruin of an old barn, essentially the remaining four walls with many small holes'* and on this basis is *'assessed as having low bat roost potential'*. On this basis, a bat roost potential emergence survey was deemed to be required.
119. A Bat Roost Activity Survey was subsequently submitted in support of the proposal to gain *'an accurate assessment of the activity and behaviour of bats at this site and to determine if bats were using the barn to roost'*. The results

provided show there are no bat roosts within the barn, but 3 species were recorded using the site to forage. On this basis the report recommended no further surveys were required.

120. A number of consultations were sent to NIEA Natural Environment Division (NED) during the processing of the application. NED acknowledged receipt of the Biodiversity Checklist and bat roost potential survey however as the ecologist assessed the buildings within the site to have bat roosting potential it was advised that further surveys were required. Following the submission of these and the badger report a further round of consultation was undertaken.
121. Based on this NED noted that it was content that the proposed development is unlikely to significantly impact protected or priority species or habitat. It noted the bat survey has indicated no bats were recorded emerging or re-entering the building and is therefore accepted that it is unlikely to currently support roosting bats, however if bats are found during development all works must cease and advice sought from NIEA Wildlife Team.
122. This advice also applies to badgers, which while they acknowledge there are no setts located within the site there is a possibility that they may do in the future. NED note some vegetation will require removal which may support breeding birds, so any removal of the buildings/structures and vegetation should be undertaken outside of the bird breeding season from March to August (inclusive).
123. A condition relating to retained trees was recommended in the response. Further consultations and responses were received following submission of letters of representation, however the advice remained that NED was content with the proposal subject to recommendations.
124. Later in the processing of the application a revised site layout and Tree Plan updating the trees to be removed around the boundaries of the site to accommodate the building and associated visibility splays was submitted and further consultation was undertaken on that basis. The response from NIEA noted that further mitigation in the form of tree planting is proposed and NED are content with the mitigation shown, advising that a condition is attached to the decision notice to ensure that the trees to be retained are protected during the construction phase.
125. Taking the information submitted in support of the application and the responses received from the statutory consultee it is contended that the proposal would also comply with the requirements of Policy NH2 and NH5 of the LCCC Plan Strategy.

### **Historic Environment and Archaeology**

126. The HED map viewer show the site is close to a flax mill site and associated mill race (IHR 02740:000:00, 02740:001:00, 02740:002:00).

127. The application was submitted with an Archaeological Baseline Survey. The survey outlines potential features associated with the flax mill, which appeared on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> edition maps, but also notes potential error or oversimplification in the mapping in terms of where the mill sat relative to the mill race. Later maps show the building labelled as a smithy, and note a slightly different orientation, with the raised mill race *'shown as a grassy strip'*. The survey notes it *'is most likely that this is a re-use of the mill building, or a portion of the mill building, rather than a fresh construction on the same footprint, but this cannot be certain given the ambiguities in mapping'*. In terms of archaeological potential this principally relates to the elements of industrial heritage, *'with the origins of the mill potentially predating the 19th century by an indeterminate amount. Any surviving remains of the original phases/fabric of the building and mill races, either in the extant portion of the structure or surviving subsurface, would be of importance in clarifying the history and development of the site'*.

In relation to the potential physical impact of the proposed development on archaeological remains the survey notes that such impacts would be expected:

*'to the upstanding structure through clearance and renovation, as well as ancillary development', and this 'would be a moderate to high level of impact, and mitigation would therefore be required'. This is recommended to include a 'Level 3 Historic Building Survey once stabilised and cleared of all debris and undergrowth...augmented with the excavation of the interior surfaces of the building down to the depth required for construction to record and identify evidence for any historic phases'. The proposed extension to the existing structure 'should also be topsoiled stripped under archaeological supervision...with 3 short trenches, each 20m in length', shown in the survey mainly to the south of the existing built form.*

128. Historic Environment Division (HED) were consulted on the proposal and have reviewed the baseline survey submitted. They have advised that they welcome 'the retention and reuse of the surviving mill building as part of this scheme and is content that this proposed development may be acceptable to the above-mentioned policy requirements providing pre-development archaeological mitigation takes place. It further notes that:

*'the mitigation proposed, including an initial Level 3 building survey of the mill, is appropriate, however the proposed test trenching regime would need some amendments' and these could be dealt with through a number of conditions recommended in the response including the requirement for a developer funded programme of archaeological works.*

129. The existing structure on site does not benefit from being either scheduled or listed. Through the processing of the application and receipt of representations it was advised that the mechanism for the identification of the structure as a Historic Building of Local Importance is through the Local Development Plan process. In the guidance document it notes that it may however not be feasible for the LDP to identify and bring forward policies specific to individual heritage assets. The council is only commencing formulation of its Local Plan Policy,

this may take some time to produce, and Councils are free to decide on a process which is suitable for their needs which is clear/ logical and may reflect that used to identify listed buildings.

130. On the basis of the representations received, which sought to identify the site as a Historic Building of Local Importance is through the Local Development Plan, the Council further queried the likelihood of statutory potential with HED. The response from HED notes that they consider the site, which is contained within the industrial heritage record, to be an archaeological site of local importance and as such Policy HE2 applies.

131. It further notes that as the site is to be incorporated into the development, they consider that policies COU4 and HE13 are appropriate and:

*'HED is supportive of the use of this building under these policies'.*

The Council would clarify that Policy HE13 relates to buildings within settlements, however this site is located within a rural setting, therefore this policy would not apply in this case. The response from HED further noted that:

*'under Policy COU4 – the Industrial Heritage site IHR 02740:001:00 is a “non-listed vernacular building”.*

132. In summary, from an archaeological heritage perspective there is no reason to object to the proposal, and the development would comply, subject to conditions, with Policies HE2 and HE4 of the LCCC Local Development Plan Strategy. Determination of whether the structure on the site is a 'non-listed vernacular building' and whether the proposal would be acceptable on the site is considered under the assessment of Policy COU4 earlier in this report.

### Consideration of Representations

133. The following details relate to points raised in the representations received by third parties on the application:

- Development is contrary to Policy COU4 and SPPS

The objection queries the existing structure as a 'locally important building' in the context of Policy COU4. It is noted, however that as per the policy a 'Locally Important Building' is a building, structure or feature, whilst not statutory listed, has been identified by the Council as an important part of their heritage, due to its local architectural or historic significance. In this case the Council has not identified any such buildings through the LDP process.

- The original building and its purpose will be lost with proposed design

It is contended that the proposed extension is significantly larger than the original structure and given views of the site would not maintain or enhance its relationship with the existing structure. It is noted that the existing structure is in a poor condition and lacks obvious architectural features which would provide a link to its historical use or purpose.

- The removal of any adjacent trees would likely severely compromise the existing stone walls already in poor condition, which may result in a 'new build' by default

The Councils assessment would share concern that that due to the level of vegetation within and close to the existing structure that removal of this would have the potential to impact on the structural integrity of the buildings. The structural assessment submitted with this application has not adequately addressed this issue which has identified significant overgrowth which would need to be cleared to fully appreciate its current condition.

- Concerns that the stone wall at the bridge will have to be removed to accommodate visibility splays which would have a visual impact.

The latest plans show that the parapet wall is to be unaltered, with retention of this not impacting on the 2 x 42 metre visibility splays. DfI Roads have been consulted and have raised no objection. In addition, they have noted that the verge in front of the parapet wall does not provide any structural stability to the parapet wall, therefore any reduction in the level of the verge will not compromise the wall's structural integrity.

- Not clear how the application will reduce the ground levels in order to provide the requirements for the visibility splays or affect the bridge.

DfI Roads have advised that there is kerbing located 600mm from the wall and back filled with concrete, which appears like a normal roadside verge. The kerb height exceeds 300 mm at points along the frontage of the parapet wall, therefore it will not be possible to lower it to below 250 mm. As it would not impede a driver's sight line along the length of the required visibility splays to any approaching vehicles, there are no concerns to the final verge/kerbing level slightly exceeding 250 mm.

- There is a blind corner at the entry which would cause significant risk when existing the site.

The drawing details as provided have been fully consulted with DfI Roads who have no issues with the visibility splays or forward sight distance demonstrated.

- Additional traffic generation on narrow road.

The application is for a single dwelling. Following further consultation with DfI Roads it is not envisaged that the scale of this proposal would warrant the refusal on the basis of an unacceptable level of traffic generation.

- Septic tank is in the floodplain and too close to proposed building.

Under the most up-to-date plans the septic tank is not located in the 1 in 100-year floodplain. NIEA Water Management Unit and Environmental Health have been consulted and have not raised objections to the proposed location, subject to the approval of discharge consent.

- The site is located in an area of known flooding through proximity of floodplain and mill race, and construction could push flooding to neighbouring properties.

A Flood Risk Assessment has been submitted, and it has been determined that the proposed building is located outside of the 1% AEP (2080) floodplain. DfI Rivers have been consulted and have advised that while not being responsible for the preparation of the Flood Risk Assessment, accepts its logic and has no reason to disagree with its conclusions. On that basis it is not considered that the proposal would lead to flooding on the site or further downstream.

- Removal of stone wall along bridge would currently also hold back floodwater from road.

The latest plans show that the parapet wall is to be unaltered.

- It is questionable whether the applicant is in 'actual possession' of the existing stone wall to the bridge, which is within the application site.

As noted, the amended plans show that the visibility splays do not require the removal of this stone wall and therefore will not be affected by the proposal. The remainder of the visibility splay will be over the application site and public road.

- The existing and proposed floor plans show the same thickness of walls which is misleading as the need for insulation/tanking to meet building regulations will likely make the conversion walls much thicker.

The nature of the existing structure means that any renovation would likely require drylining. The requirement for insulation to meet building regulations would be considered under separate legislation, however it is not contended that any reduction in the internal space would result in the development being contrary to planning policy.

- The provision of a new ground floor at least 150mm above the external ground level in accordance with building regulations and the FRA would compromise available heights at first floor and make plans shown unviable.

The mezzanine element of the proposal only makes up a small portion of the total floorspace of the dwelling. From the plans submitted it is unclear what this area will be used for. In this case this could not be a reason for refusal and would be subject to assessment by building control.

- A large number of trees will have to be removed to allow any dwelling to be constructed on the site which will have a visual as well as ecological impact.

An updated site layout plan indicates the trees to be removed, trees retained and additional trees to be planted. Due to the topography of the site and immediate area, as well as the trees to be retained and additional planting, it

is not envisaged that a dwelling on this site would result in unacceptable visual impact. Natural Environment Division have been consulted and have advised that they would have no concerns based on the plans submitted, subject to protection of existing trees and works to trees being undertaken outside breeding season.

- It was requested that trees on the site should be protected

The LCCC Tree Officer has been consulted however it was determined that the trees on site do not satisfactorily meet the required six criteria under legislation for establishing a TPO. In particular, issues included the position of the trees in the sunken topography combined with the rural nature of the locality and lack of distinctiveness compared with surrounding trees as well as the poor health and condition of some of the trees.

- There are two retained trees within 5 metres of the building which may cause insurance issues.

Insurance for the property would be outside the remit of planning.

- Invasive species have been present and are identified on the site

The Ecological Statement has advised that Himalayan Balsam has been found on the site. NED have been consulted and have raised no issue with this. Management or removal of such species would be undertaken under separate spaces. NED Standing Advice invasive species and have included conditions/informatives should the application be approved.

- Invasion of privacy of neighbouring dwelling

The building to be converted is approximately 27 metres from the corner of No 18 which is the closest dwelling and on the other side of the road. The distance and its orientation towards the front of the dwelling would limit the potential adverse impacts on amenity including overlooking. The site is also close to No 15 to the west however the distance between the proposed dwelling and existing is approximately 50 metres with the two sites currently divided by a thick area of mature trees and other planting.

- Proposal does not 'protect the established rural pattern' of Gransha Close in terms of spacing of dwellings

The site is located in an area that is characterised by scattered detached dwellings and agricultural development. It is contended that the reuse of the existing structure on this site would not result in an adverse impact on the established rural pattern in the area.

- Potential for building to be used as a short-term rental

The application has been submitted to provide a dwelling and not to provide a short-term rental and must be considered on the basis of what has been

applied for. Should it be used solely as a short term let consideration will be taken of whether enforcement action is necessary.

- No need for the development in this location

This proposal has been submitted to the Council as a proposed conversion of an existing structure. Such proposals are not based on need but rather whether they comply with planning policy. In this case it is not considered whether the proposal fully complies with Policy COU4 of the Local Development Plan Strategy.

- Lack of light for proposed development

While there are trees adjacent to the site, mainly to the west, a dwelling on this site should retain an acceptable amount of light from the east and south, and as such would not form a reason for refusal.

- Request has been made to consider additional protection for this structure through the local plan

The mechanism through which council may consider identification of Historic Buildings of Local Importance is through the Local Development Plan (LDP), it may however not be feasible for the LDP to identify and bring forward policies specific to individual heritage assets. The council is only commencing formulation of its Local Plan Policy, this may take some time to produce, and Councils are free to decide on a process which is suitable for their needs which is clear/ logical and may reflect that used to identify listed buildings.

### Conclusion

134. For the reasons outlined above, the proposal on balance fails to meet the requirements of policies COU1 and COU4 of the LCCC Local Development Plan Strategy.

### Recommendation

135. It is recommended that planning permission is refused

### Refusal Reasons

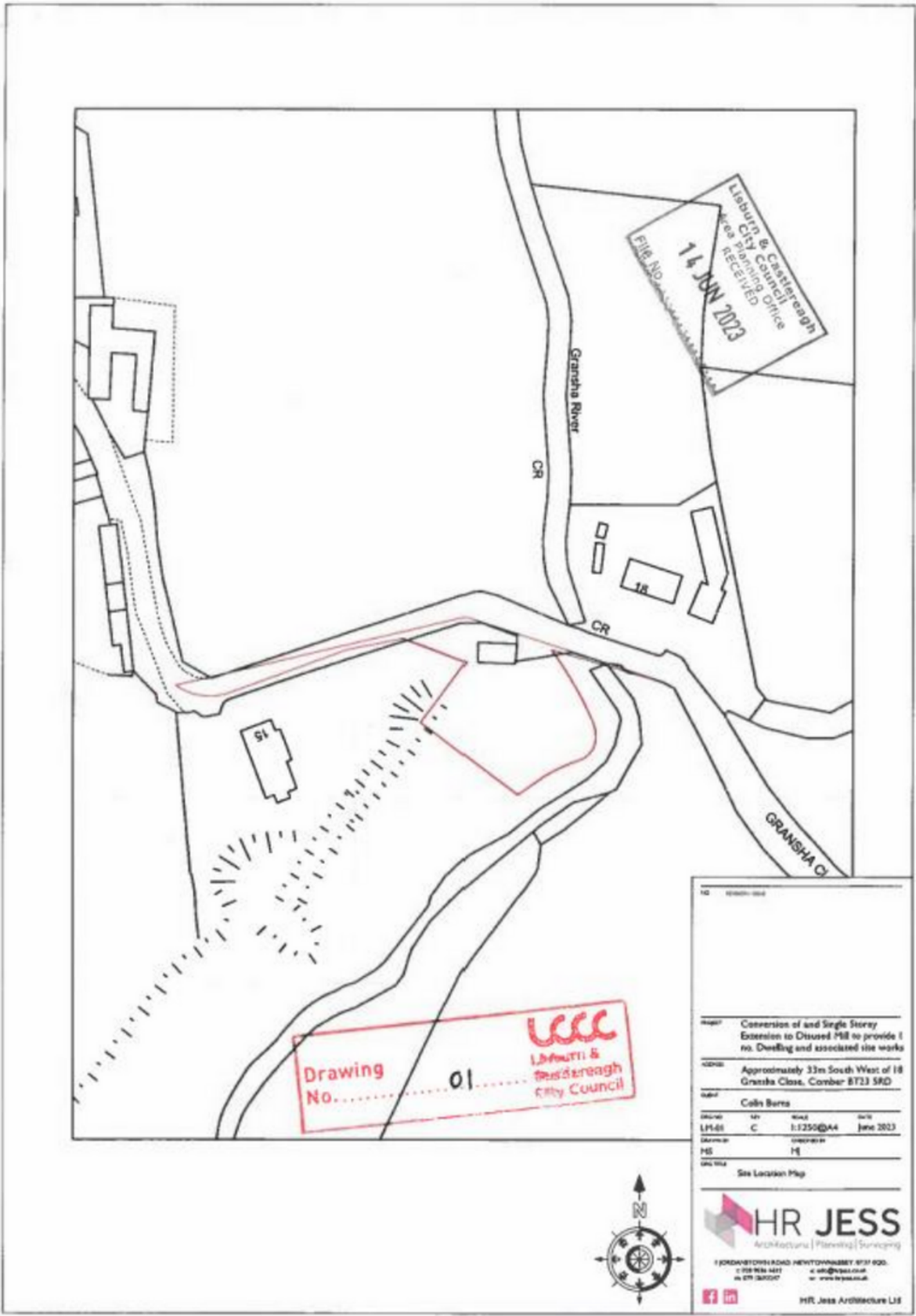
136. The following refusal reasons are recommended:

- The proposal is contrary to Policy COU1 of the Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council Plan Strategy, in that it is not considered that this proposal would be a type of development which is acceptable in the countryside that will contribute to the aims of sustainable development.
- The proposal is contrary to Policy COU4 of the Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council Plan Strategy, in that it is not considered that this proposal would result in a sympathetic conversion of a vernacular building or suitably locally

important building for use as a single dwelling where this would secure its upkeep and retention.

- The proposal is contrary to Policy COU4 of the Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council Plan Strategy, in that it has not been adequately demonstrated that the building is reasonably capable of being made structurally sound or otherwise improved.
- The proposal is contrary to Policy COU4 (b) of the Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council Plan Strategy, in that it would not maintain or enhance the form, character and architectural features, design and setting of the existing building and would have an adverse effect on the character or appearance of the locality.
- The proposal is contrary to Policy COU4 (c) of the Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council Plan Strategy, in that it is not considered the proposed new extension is sympathetic to the scale and massing of the existing building.
- The proposal is contrary to Policy COU15 (f) of the Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council Plan Strategy, in that it is not considered the design of the building is appropriate for the site and its locality.

Site Location Plan – LA05/2023/0494/F



## Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council

| Planning Committee Report |   |
|---------------------------|---|
| Date of Committee         | 02 February 2026  |
| Committee Interest        | Local Application (Called In)   |
| Application Reference     | LA05/2024/0638/F  |
| Date of Application       | 27 August 2024  |
| Proposal Description      | Proposed replacement of 15 metre high monopole with 22 metre high lattice tower, 3no. existing antennas to be removed and replaced on new tower, existing 1no, 300mm transmission dish to be relocated to new tower, proposed 1no 300mm transmission dish to be fixed to headframe, proposed installation of 1no equipment cabinet and all other ancillary apparatus. |
| Location                  | Lands to the side of 7 Begny Hill, Dromara, Co Down, BT25 2AS   |
| Representations           | Twenty-two  |
| Case Officer              | Callum Henderson  |
| Recommendation            | <b>Approval</b>   |

### Summary of Recommendation

1. This is a local application. It is presented to the Committee for determination in accordance with the Protocol for the Operation of the Committee in that it has been Called In.
2. The application is presented to the Planning Committee with a recommendation to approve as the proposal is in accordance with the requirements of policy TEL1 of the Plan Strategy as the development and associated enabling works will not result in unacceptable damage to the visual amenity of the area or harm any environmentally sensitive features or locations. It has also been reasonably demonstrated that criteria a) to d) of the policy have been met.

### Description of Site and Surroundings

3. The site is located in the village of Dromara, on lands to the east of 7 Begny Hill Road and within the grounds of a telephone exchange.

- 4. An existing monopole mast that is 15.0 metres in height sits adjacent to the eastern façade of the exchange building and is bounded by Begny Hill Road to the north, and by residential properties to the east, west and south,. The site is also bounded by a gravel pitch to the northwest. The nearest residential properties are situated at Woodford Green and Barclay Manor.
- 5. There is a hard standing to accommodate the parking of service vehicles and a turning circle to allow the vehicles to turn within the site. The remainder of the site consists of a lawn. The site is bound by 4 metre high security fencing.
- 6. The character of the wider area is mainly residential in nature, with shopping, civic and public amenities being situated further west along Begny Hill Road in the centre of the village.

Proposed Development

- 7. The application seeks permission for the replacement of an existing 15.0 metre high monopole mast with antenna, with a 22.0 metre high lattice tower, the replacement of 3no. existing antennas, the relocation of 1no. existing 300mm transmission dish, a proposed 1no. 300mm transmission dish, the proposed installation of 1no. GPS module and 1no. equipment cabinet on the ground that will sit immediately northeast of the tower.

Relevant Planning History

- 8. The relevant planning history is outlined in the table below. This history includes part of the site within its site boundary:

| Reference Number | Description   | Location   | Decision                      |
|------------------|---|--|-------------------------------|
| LA05/2016/0866/F | Proposed removal of existing mast and replacement with a 15m telecommunications mast carrying 3no. antennae and 2no. radio dishes, and associated works including 3No. equipment cabinets | Within Telephone Exchange on lands c.21m north of 18m Barclay Manor, Dromara | Permission granted 21/12/2016 |

## Consultations

9. The following consultations were raised:

| Consultee            | Response     |
|----------------------|--------------|
| DfI Roads            | No objection |
| Environmental Health | No objection |

## Representations

10. Twenty-two representations have been received. The issues raised in these representations are summarised below with consideration of these set out later in the report.

11. The twenty objections received are summarised below:

- Design and scale of the mast being unappealing
- Visual amenity
- Health concerns
- Siting of mast and non-consideration of other sites

12. The two comments received are summarised below:

- Asked to confirm the location of the mast
- Sought assurance that the existing mast would be removed
- Background noise of the equipment
- Houses in the new development of Woodford Green not represented on the submitted location plan

## Planning Policy Context

### Local Development Plan Context

13. Section 6(4) of the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 requires that in making a determination on planning applications, regard must be had to the requirements of the local development plan and that determination must be in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Plan Strategy 2032

14. It is stated at page 16 of Part 1 of the draft Plan Strategy that:

*Transitional arrangements will apply in relation to the existing Plan designations. The existing Development Plans which remain in effect for different parts of the Council area are set out in Chapter 2 (Existing Development Plans). Following adoption the Development Plan will be the Plan Strategy and any old Development Plan, with the Plan Strategy having priority in the event of a conflict. Regulation 1 state that the old Development Plans will cease to have effect on adoption of the new LDP at Local Policies Plan (LPP) stage.*

*The Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan (BMAP) was intended to be the Development Plan on its adoption in September 2014. This Plan was subsequently declared unlawful following a successful legal challenge and therefore remains in its entirety un-adopted.*

*BMAP in its post-inquiry form was at an advanced stage and therefore remains a material consideration. Draft BMAP (November 2004) in its pre-inquiry form also remains a material consideration in conjunction with recommendations of the Planning Appeals Commission Public Local Inquiry Reports.*

15. In accordance with the transitional arrangements, the development plan is the Plan Strategy and the Lisburn Area Plan (LAP). Draft BMAP remains a material consideration.
16. The site is within the designated settlement of Dromara in both the LAP and in the draft BMAP.
17. The strategic policy for Sustainable Development is set out in Part 1 of the Plan Strategy. Strategic Policy 01 – Sustainable Development states that:

*The Plan will support development proposals which further sustainable development including facilitating sustainable housing growth; promoting balanced economic growth; protecting and enhancing the historic and natural environment; mitigating and adapting to climate change and supporting sustainable infrastructure.*

18. The strategic policy for Creating and Enhancing Shared Space and Quality Places is set out in Part 1 of the Plan Strategy. Strategic Policy 03 – Creating and Enhancing Shared Space and Quality Places states that:

*The Plan will support development proposals that contribute to the creation of an environment which is accessible to all and enhances opportunities for shared communities; has a high standard of connectivity and supports shared use of public realm. Good quality housing that supports more balanced communities must offer a variety of house types, sizes and tenures to meet different needs.*

19. The strategic policy for Good Design and Positive Place Making is set out in Part 1 of the Plan Strategy. Strategic Policy 05 – Good Design and Positive Place Making states that:

*The Plan will support development proposals that incorporate good design and positive place-making to further sustainable development, encourage healthier living, promote accessibility and inclusivity and contribute to safety. Good design should respect the character of the area, respect environmental and heritage assets and promote local distinctiveness. Positive place-making should acknowledge the need for quality, place-specific contextual design which promotes accessibility and inclusivity, creating safe, vibrant and adaptable places.*

20. The strategic policy for Telecommunications and Other Utilities is set out in Part 1 of the Plan Strategy. Strategic Policy 22 - Telecommunications and Other Utilities states that:

*The Plan will support development proposals that: a) facilitate the delivery of sustainable telecommunications and other utilities infrastructure requirements to meet need over the Plan period, encouraging future proofing to adapt to technological change b) minimise any potential visual intrusion and environmental impacts to protect both the rural and urban landscape, and natural and historic environment.*

21. The following operational policies in Part 2 of the Plan Strategy also apply.
22. This is the replacement of an existing monopole telecommunications mast with a taller lattice tower with additional equipment and a new equipment cabinet, and as such it will be assessed against policy TEL1.

### **TEL1 Telecommunications Development**

*Planning permission will be granted for telecommunications development and any necessary enabling works that will not result in unacceptable damage to visual amenity or harm to environmentally sensitive features or locations. Developers will be required to demonstrate that telecommunications proposals, having regard to technical and operational constraints, have been sited and designed to minimise visual and environmental impact.*

*A new telecommunications mast will only be considered acceptable where the above requirements are met and it is reasonably demonstrated that:*

- a) *the sharing of an existing mast or other structure has been investigated and is not feasible*
- b) *a new mast represents a better environmental solution than other options.*

*In addition, applications for telecommunications development by Code System Operators or broadcasters will need to include:*

- c) *information about the purpose and need for the particular development and how it fits into the operator's or broadcaster's wider network*
- d) *where proposals relate to the development of a mobile telecommunications base station, a statement indicating its location, the height of the antenna, the frequency and modulation characteristics, details of power output; and declaring that the base station when operational will meet the ICNIRP36 guidelines for public exposure to electromagnetic fields.*

### ***Justification and Amplification***

*For the purposes of this policy telecommunications is defined as both wired and wireless voice and digital data (broadband) transfer.*

*Code System Operators are electronic communications network operators (Code Operators) who are regulated through the Electronic Communications Code (the Code).*

*Code System Broadcasters are users of the electronic communications network provided by the Code Operators.*

*The visual and environmental impact of telecommunications should be kept to a minimum and equipment should become an accepted and unobtrusive feature of urban and rural areas.*

### ***Technical and Operational Constraints***

*Whilst the special needs and technical constraints associated with telecommunications development will be taken into account, there is also a corresponding need to adequately control telecommunications development so that rural landscapes, urban skylines and townscape character are not unduly spoiled. Wired telecommunication services should be laid underground for the majority of new development proposals. In rural locations, where underground provision is not*

*practical or feasible, an exception will be permitted for the provision of overhead lines and poles, subject to compliance with the requirements of this policy. In all cases when bringing forward proposals, applicants will be expected to provide information about the purpose and need for the particular apparatus or equipment.*

*The impact of all telecommunication proposals will be considered against this planning policy and the guidance contained in the Department's Development Control Advice Note (DCAN) 14, Siting and Design of Radio Telecommunications Equipment (Published by the former Department of the Environment, April 2008).*

*Applications for masts within 3 kilometres of the perimeter of an aerodrome or aircraft landing site within the Council area, will be required to include evidence that the Civil Aviation Authority, the Ministry of Defence or the aerodrome operator, as appropriate, has been notified of the proposal. The Council will take into account any relevant views expressed.*

*The planning system is not the place for determining health safeguards from electromagnetic emissions from telecommunications equipment. The Department of Health considers that the guidelines of the International Commission on Non-Ionising Radiation Protection (ICNIRP) for public exposure to electromagnetic fields, as accepted by the World Health Organisation<sup>37</sup>, are based on the best evidence available to date. Accordingly where concern is raised about the health effects of exposure to electromagnetic fields, it is the view of the Department of Health that if the proposed mobile telecommunications development meets the ICNIRP guidelines in all respects it should not be necessary for the Council to consider this aspect further.*

*All mobile phone base stations in the UK are expected to meet the ICNIRP public exposure guidelines. Applications for mobile telecommunications base stations must be accompanied by a declaration that the apparatus when operational will meet the guidelines. Similarly where it is intended to place additional antennas onto an existing mast or site, the operator must confirm in a declaration that the cumulative exposure will not exceed the ICNIRP guidelines.*

*In any development, significant and irremediable interference with other electrical equipment of any kind will be a material planning consideration. Only if there is clear evidence that significant electromagnetic interference will arise, or will probably arise as a result of a telecommunications development, and that no practicable remedy is available, will there generally be any justification for the Council to take it into account in determining a planning application.*

23. The SPPS Edition 2 was published in December 2025. It is the most recent planning policy, and it is stated at paragraph 1.5 that:

*The provisions of the SPPS apply to the whole of Northern Ireland. They must be taken into account in the preparation of Local Development Plans (LDP) and are material to all decisions on individual planning applications and appeals.*

24. It is stated at paragraph 6.232 that:

*In plan-making and decision-taking, planning authorities should encourage and support the appropriate use of micro-generation energy, including the retrofitting of renewable and low carbon energy technologies.*

25. In relation to Telecommunications and other utilities paragraph 6.243 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.*

26. Paragraph 6.245 states:

*The aim of the SPPS in relation to telecommunications and other utilities is to facilitate the development of such infrastructure in an efficient and effective manner whilst keeping the environmental impact to a minimum.*

## Assessment

### TEL1 – Telecommunications Development

27. It is stated in policy TEL1 that the applicant must demonstrate that the proposed telecommunication infrastructure and ancillary works will not result in unacceptable damage to the visual amenity or harm environmentally sensitive features.
28. It is stated in the supporting statement that the taller lattice mast is required to support 5G coverage in the village. Following a site inspection, officers note that the proposed mast is proposed to be located immediately adjacent to and south of an existing mast. It is located on land used as an existing telephone exchange and the existing mast is being permanently removed after the new mast is erected and operational. There is no cumulative visual impact arising from the installation of the mast.

29. The proposed mast will be located within rising ground in the backdrop which has been developed for housing. Whilst it is acknowledged that the mast is taller (increasing from 15.0 to 22.0 metres) and the lattice structure has more bulk the rising ground and buildings in the backdrop mitigate any harm caused to the visual amenity of the village and its setting. A telecommunications mast is an established part of the streetscape and landscape of the village and an integral part of its character.
30. The proposed site is not located within or adjacent to any environmentally sensitive features or locations. It is not impacted by any site specific environmental designation, archaeological feature or built heritage and the construction of a concrete base on a lawn is not considered to present the potential for any unacceptable adverse impact on or damage to known priority habitats, species or features of natural heritage importance.
31. The proposal must also meet all the other criteria of policy TEL1 and these are considered below.
32. The Supplementary Information document submitted as part of the application states:

*"The SPSS sets out that an advanced, high-quality communications infrastructure is essential for sustainable economic growth. The development of high-speed broadband technology and other communications networks also plays a vital role in enhancing the provision of local community facilities and services.*

*The proposed base station will provide enhanced 3G and 4G coverage for VMO2, as well as brand-new 5G coverage to this area of Dromara. Given the improved network coverage, capacity and connectivity which will be achieved from the installation of the lattice tower, the three new antennas and associated equipment cabinet, the impact of the proposal on the surrounding streetscape must be balanced against the significant economic, environmental, and social benefits which will be achieved. It is considered the proposed installation is appropriate given the need for the installation in the area, to meet the local service demand.*

*This proposed scheme is considered unlikely to have any detrimental material impact on the local area but significant connectivity improvements, which is a material consideration in the judgment of the site's suitability. The planning constraints (where there are any) have shaped the location of the proposal. The proposed site has been strategically placed to address any residential amenity issues as much as possible."*

33. In reference to the above supplementary information, the sharing of an existing mast or other structure has been investigated and is not considered feasible in this circumstance. Additionally, the mast is to provide services for both the Virgin

Media and O2 networks. There is a precedent of an existing mast on site with the new mast proposed to be shared between two networks. Officers accept that the issue of sharing has been fully and properly explored by the application and that the sharing by network providers is considered to reduce the need for additional towers in other locations and thus is considered that the proposal complies with criteria a) of Policy TEL1.

34. For the same reasons set out in paragraphs 28 to 30 locating a new mast close to the site of an existing mast is considered to be the best environmental option. It makes use of existing brownfield land and existing infrastructure and for these reasons criteria b) of Policy TEL1 is considered to be met.
35. In the justification provided it is noted that requirements for call and particularly data services have increased in both Dromara and the wider area that the existing mast serves. Additionally, 'clutter' is considered to have increased since the installation of the existing mast. 'Clutter' can refer to new buildings, tree growth and other physical features that disturb the strength and distance of radio signals. The increase in height is required to overcome such 'clutter' to ensure that the signal remains unaffected and is propagated as intended. Additionally, the mast is to be shared by both the Virgin Media and O2 networks, further justifying the replacement mast. In light of this, it is considered that the requirements of criteria c) of Policy TEL1 are met.
36. The submitted Supplementary Information document provides further details regarding the development's location, height of the antenna, the frequency and modulation characteristics, and details of power output. It also states the following regarding ICNIRP guidelines for public exposure to electromagnetic fields:

*"All Cornerstone installations are designed and constructed in compliance with the precautionary ICNIRP public exposure guidelines as adopted in EU Council Recommendation of 12 July 1999 on the limitation of exposure of the general public to electromagnetic fields (0 Hz to 300 GHz). These guidelines have been set following a thorough review of the science and take into consideration both thermal and non-thermal effects. They protect all members of the public 24 hours a day. In addition, precautionary measures have been taken into account when setting relevant guideline limits for the public (i.e. in the UK a safety factor of 50 times is applied to the public exposure guideline).*

*When measured, field strengths are many times lower than the precautionary ICNIRP general public guidelines.*

*An ICNIRP certificate is provided with every planning application and this verifies that the mobile phone base station, when operational, will meet the precautionary ICNIRP guidelines. We also provide further documentation to clarify that the ICNIRP certificate addresses emissions from all mobile phone network operators' equipment at the proposed site"*

37. The Council's Environmental Health team has been consulted and offer no objection. The officer has no reason to dispute the detail of the technical information or the technical advice offered by the consultee. No contrary evidence is submitted. The proposal clearly demonstrates the location, height, frequency and modulation as well as the power output. Additionally, as mentioned above and to be conditioned as such, the proposal would meet the ICNIRP guidelines for exposure to electromagnetic fields. Therefore, the proposal is considered to comply with criteria d) of Policy TEL1.

### Consideration of representations

38. The 20 objections received are summarised below:

- Design and scale of the mast being unappealing

*The design of the structure, while representing an increase in height from 15.0m to 22.0m, is not considered to result in loss of light or outlook to the nearby residential receptors owing to the open lattice structure.*

- Visual amenity

*The existing structure is already a prominent feature and at the height of nearby dwellings, the proposed increase in height, is not considered to constitute a significant detrimental impact upon visual amenity owing to the precedent of the existing mast in situ currently on site as well as the open nature of the lattice structure of the proposed replacement mast.*

- Health concerns

*As stated in the supplementary documents, all Cornerstone installations are designed and constructed in compliance with the precautionary ICNIRP public exposure guidelines as adopted in EU Council Recommendation of 12 July 1999 on the limitation of exposure of the general public to electromagnetic fields (0 Hz to 300 GHz). These guidelines have been set following a thorough review of the science and take into consideration both thermal and non-thermal effects. They protect all members of the public 24 hours a day. In addition, precautionary measures have been taken into account when setting relevant guideline limits for the public (i.e. in the UK a safety factor of 50 times is applied to the public exposure guideline).*

*When measured, field strengths are many times lower than the precautionary ICNIRP general public guidelines.*

*Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council Environmental Health were consulted and offered no objection, subject to condition that the installation will adhere to the aforementioned ICNIRP guidelines, of which will be conditioned should approval be granted.*

- Siting of mast and non-consideration of other sites

*Additionally, the site has long been used as a telephone exchange with an associated communications mast in place since 2018. Those residential receptors to the east in Woodford Green were built after the installation of a telecommunications mast in this location on Begny Hill Road and thus the use is well established. With locating the development in the proposed site and in place of the existing mast, a new mast is not considered to represent a materially worse environmental solution than other options.*

39. The two comments are summarised below:

- Asked to confirm the location of the mast

*This was confirmed via written response that the location of the proposed mast is to be sited immediately south to where the existing mast sits. Additionally, all plans related to the proposal are viewable on the public portal.*

- Sought assurance that the existing mast would be removed

*The existing mast will be removed to make way for that proposed, this will sit immediately south to where the existing mast sits. This is noted on the plans.*

- Background noise of the equipment

*The proposal would see the two existing ground cabinets powered down, these would remain in situ, albeit in a dormant state. A new cabinet is proposed immediately north of the proposed mast. This cabinet would be used to house electrical and communications equipment to enable the mast to function. It is acknowledged that such cabinets are not silent on account of any cooling facilities or a general electrical hum, however, this cabinet would be situated entirely below the existing retaining wall to those dwellings along Woodford Green and it is considered that the reduction of two working cabinets to one would not represent an unacceptable harm to the amenity of adjacent residential receptors. The Council's Environmental Health team were consulted and offer no objections or concerns in relation to noise.*

- Houses in the new development of Woodford Green not represented on the submitted location plan

*The site location plan submitted shows only a portion of the dwellings in Woodford Green which at the time of submission in 2024 were only recently completed and so would not have immediately shown on various mapping services. The proposed site plan submitted with the application does, however, take account of the adjacent dwellings in Woodford Green with the aforementioned dwellings considered during both site visits and desk-based assessments.*

## Conclusions

40. The proposal is in accordance with the requirements of policy TEL1 of the Plan Strategy as the development and associated enabling works will not result in unacceptable damage to the visual amenity of the area or harm any environmentally sensitive features or locations. It has also been reasonably demonstrated that criteria a) to d) of policy TEL1 have been met.

## Recommendations

41. It is recommended that planning permission is approved.

## Conditions

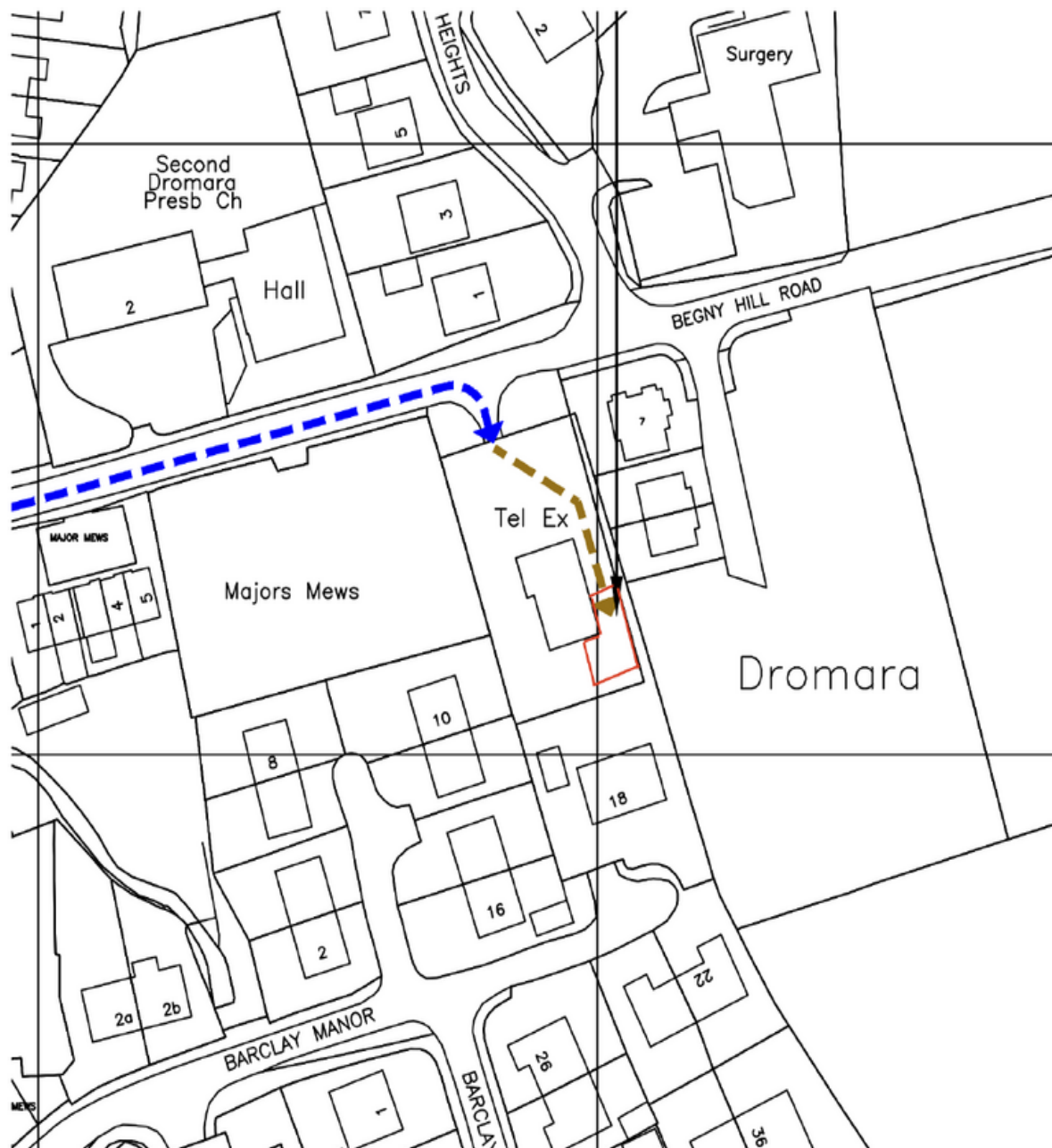
42. The following conditions are recommended:
  1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of 5 years from the date of this permission.  
  
**Reason:** As required by Section 61 of the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011.
  2. Within four weeks of the new mast being erected the existing mast shall be decommissioned and removed from the site in accordance with drawing no. 02 published to the Planning Portal on 3 September 2024.

**Reason:** To ensure the visual amenity of the area is maintained in accordance with the requirement of policy TEL1

3. The proposed mast when operational shall be compliant with the requirements of the radio frequency public exposure guidelines of the International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection (ICNIRP).

**Reason:** To ensure the mast and associated equipment is constructed and operated in accordance with current ICNIRP guidelines.

Site Location Plan – LA05/2024/0638/F



Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council

| Committee Report        |   |
|-------------------------|---|
| Date of Committee       | 02 February 2026  |
| Committee Interest      | Local Application (Called In)   |
| Application Reference   | LA05/2025/0539/F  |
| Date of Application     | 23 July 2025  |
| District Electoral Area | Castlereagh South   |
| Proposal Description    | Retention of existing container for hairdressers                                  |
| Location                | Sideburns Barber Lounge, Carryduff Business Park, Comber Road, Carryduff, BT8 8AN |
| Representations         | None  |
| Case Officer            | Callum Henderson  |
| Recommendation          | <b>Refusal</b>  |

Summary of Recommendations

1. This is a local application. It is presented to the Committee for determination in accordance with the Protocol for the Operation of the Committee in that it has been Called In.
2. The application is presented to the Planning Committee with a recommendation to refuse as the proposal is contrary to the requirements of policies TC1 and TC3 of the Plan Strategy and the retention of this building will harm the vitality and viability of Carryduff town centre by allowing a retail use outside the town centre which has existing vacancies.
3. In addition, the proposal is contrary to the requirements of policy ED7 of the Plan Strategy that seeks to retain zoned land for economic development and is not considered to benefit from the exemptions as set out in the policy.

Description of Site and Surroundings

4. This 0.1 hectare site is located in the Carryduff Business Park, of which is accessed from the Comber Road (B178). Within the site is a shipping container converted to a barber shop on what was formerly a portion of parking.
5. The single shipping container is 6.1metres in length and 3.0 metres in width with a single access door to the front elevation and two windows either side of this access. The shipping container is finished in dark blue corrugated metal with white PVC windows.

### **Surroundings**

6. The site is within the settlement of Carryduff and is situated within the Carryduff Business Park. The site sits outside of the designated town centre of Carryduff, the boundary of which is 550 metres to the west along Comber Road and Church Road at Carryduff Library.

### **Proposed Development**

7. Full permission is sought for the retention of a shipping container at Carryduff Business Park for the use as a hairdressers (barber shop).

### **Relevant Planning History**

8. The planning history associated with the application site is set out in the table below:

| Reference Number | Description  | Location  | Decision                               |
|------------------|--|---|--|
| Y/1994/0398      | Business Park/light industrial warehouse/distribution, and ancillary showroom and office accommodation | Comber Road, Adjacent to Fire Station               | Approved 4 <sup>th</sup> March 1996    |
| Y/1998/0325      | Retail Warehouse   | Carryduff Business Park, Comber Road                | Approved 23 <sup>rd</sup> October 1998 |
| Y/2012/0063/F    | Change of use from storage facility to family entertainment centre                                     | Unit 3B Carryduff Business Park Comber Road BT8 8AN | Approved 22 <sup>nd</sup> August 2012  |

## Consultations

9. The following consultations were carried out:

| Consultee            | Response     |
|----------------------|--------------|
| Environmental Health | No objection |
| DfI Roads            | No objection |

## Representations

10. No representations were received in respect to the application.

## Local Development Plan

11. Section 6(4) of the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 requires that in making a determination on planning applications, regard must be had to the requirements of the local development plan and that determination must be in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

### Plan Strategy 2032

12. It is stated at Part 1 of the Plan Strategy that:

*Transitional arrangements will apply in relation to the existing Plan designations. The existing Development Plans which remain in effect for different parts of the Council area are set out in Chapter 2 (Existing Development Plans). Following adoption the Development Plan will be the Plan Strategy and any old Development Plan, with the Plan Strategy having priority in the event of a conflict. Regulation 1 state that the old Development Plans will cease to have effect on adoption of the new LDP at Local Policies Plan (LPP) stage.*

*The Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan (BMAP) was intended to be the Development Plan on its adoption in September 2014. This Plan was subsequently declared unlawful following a successful legal challenge and therefore remains in its entirety un-adopted.*

*BMAP in its post-inquiry form was at an advanced stage and therefore remains a material consideration. Draft BMAP (November 2004) in its pre-inquiry form also remains a material consideration in conjunction with recommendations of*

*the Planning Appeals Commission Public Local Inquiry Reports.*

13. In accordance with the transitional arrangements, the development plan is the Plan Strategy and the Carryduff Local Plan. Draft BMAP remains a material consideration.
14. Draft BMAP and the Carryduff Local Plan identify the application site as being within the settlement development limit of Carryduff.
15. The site is also designated as existing employment and industry land in the latest revision to draft BMAP (CF08).
16. A building is defined at Article 252 of the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 as:  
  
*“building” includes any structure or erection, and any part of a building, as so defined, but does not include plant or machinery comprised in a building;*
17. This structure is set on hard standing and connected to an electricity supply. It is considered for these reasons to meet the definition of a building rather than a temporary structure.
18. The building is being used for a Class A1 (Shops) retail use outside the town centre of Carryduff and on land zoned for employment in draft BMAP which has an established employment use.
19. The strategic policy for sustainable development is set out in Part 1 of the Plan Strategy. Strategic Policy 01 Sustainable Development states:  
  
*The Plan will support development proposals which further sustainable development including facilitating sustainable housing growth; promoting balanced economic growth; protecting and enhancing the historic and natural environment; mitigating and adapting to climate change and supporting sustainable infrastructure.*
20. Strategic Policy 11 Economic Development states:  
  
*The Plan will support development proposals that:*  
  - a) support and promote the Strategic Mixed Use Sites at West Lisburn/Blaris and Purdysburn/Knockbracken in accordance with key site requirements*
  - b) support and promote the local employment sites throughout the Council area, to help provide opportunities for a range of economic needs and businesses*
  - c) encourage mixed use schemes supporting regeneration on sites previously used for economic purposes to help tackle inequality and deprivation*
  - d) provide Class B1 Business within the strategic mixed use sites at West Lisburn/ Blaris and Purdysburn/Knockbracken in accordance with key site requirements.*
21. Strategic Policy 14 Town Centres, Retailing and Other Uses states:

*The Plan will support development proposals that:*

- a) promote town centres, retailing and other uses within the City and town centres to enhance their vitality and viability in accordance with their role and function in the retail hierarchy*
- b) support the role of District and Local Centres.*

22. The operational policies in Part 2 of the Plan Strategy also apply.

### **Economic Development**

23. The proposal is to retain a building used for a class A1 retail use on land zoned for existing employment and industry. Policy ED7 – Retention of Zoned Land and Economic Development states:

*Development that would result in the loss of land or buildings zoned for economic development in a Local Development Plan to other uses will not be permitted, unless the zoned land has been substantially developed for alternative uses.*

*An exception will be permitted for the development of a B1 or sui generis employment use within an existing or proposed economic/employment area where it can be demonstrated:*

- a) The proposal is compatible with the predominant economic use*
- b) It is of a scale, nature and form appropriate to the location*
- c) The proposal will not lead to a significant diminution of the economic / employment land resource in the locality and the plan area generally.*

*A further exception will apply to retailing and commercial leisure development which is ancillary in nature*

### **Town Centres, Retailing and Other Uses**

24. The proposal is for a class A1 retail use outside of the town centre boundary. Policy TC1 Town Centres, Retailing and Other Uses states:

*A Sequential Approach will be adopted for planning applications for retail and other city / town centre uses to be considered in the following order of preference:*

- a) primary retail core and retail frontage (where designated)*
- b) city or town centres*
- c) edge of city or town centres*

- d) *out of centre locations – only where sites are accessible by a choice of good public transport*

25. Policy TC3 Town Centres states:

*The Plan seeks to strengthen the role of the three primary towns, Carryduff, Royal Hillsborough and Moira, which serve a local population and offer a variety of services. Planning permission will be granted for retail and other town centre uses where all of the following criteria are met.*

- a) *Proposals are suitable in terms of scale, size, design and form*
- b) *Proposals do not conflict with other statutory designations, such as Conservation Area designation*

*Beyond a designated town centre boundary proposals for town centre uses will only be granted planning permission in accordance with the sequential approach of Policy TC1 and where there would be no adverse impact on adjacent land uses.*

**Access, Movement and Parking**

26. The proposal will attract customers to the site. Policy TRA1 Creating an Accessible Environment states that:

*The external layout of all development proposals will incorporate, where appropriate:*

- a) *facilities to aid accessibility e.g. level access to buildings, provision of dropped kerbs and tactile paving etc, together with the removal of any unnecessary obstructions*
- b) *user friendly and convenient movement along pathways and an unhindered approach to buildings*
- c) *priority pedestrian and cycling movement within and between land uses*
- d) *ease of access to car parking reserved for disabled or other users, public transport facilities and taxi ranks.*

*Public buildings will only be permitted where they are designed to provide suitable access for customers, visitors and employees. Access to existing buildings and their surroundings should be improved as opportunities arise through alterations, extensions and changes of use.*

*Submission of a Transport Assessment Form (TAF)<sup>32</sup> and a Design and Access Statement may also be required to accompanying development proposals*

27. The use requires staff and visitor parking. Policy TRA7 Car Parking and Servicing Arrangements in New Development states:

*Development proposals will provide adequate provision for car parking and appropriate servicing arrangements. The precise amount of car parking will be determined according to the specific characteristics of the development and its location having regard to published standards<sup>33</sup> or any reduction provided for in an area of parking restraint designated in the Local Development Plan. Proposals should not prejudice road safety or significantly inconvenience the flow of vehicles.*

*Beyond areas of parking restraint a reduced level of car parking provision may be acceptable in the following circumstances:*

- a) where, through a Transport Assessment or accompanying Travel Plan, it forms part of a package of measures to promote alternative transport modes*
- b) where the development is in a highly accessible location well served by public transport*
- c) where the development would benefit from spare capacity available in nearby public car parks or adjacent on street car parking*
- d) where shared car parking is a viable option*
- e) where the exercise of flexibility would assist in the conservation of the historic or natural environment, would aid rural regeneration, facilitate a better quality of development or the beneficial re-use of an existing building.*

*Proposals involving car parking in excess of the Department's published standards will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances, subject to the submission of a Transport Assessment outlining alternatives.*

*A proportion of the spaces to be provided will be reserved for people with disabilities*

*Car parking proposals should include an appropriate number of reserved electric charging point spaces and their associated equipment.*

*Where a reduced level of car parking provision is applied or accepted, this will not normally apply to the number of reserved spaces to be provided*

## **Renewable Energy**

28. This is a new building. Policy RE2 Integrated Renewable Energy states that:

*Planning permission will be granted for a development proposal which integrates renewable energy technology including microgeneration and passive solar design (PSD) in its layout, siting and design, where it meets the provisions of Policy RE1 and provided the technology is appropriate to the location in terms of any visual or amenity impact it may have*

Justification and amplification

*The Council will encourage greater integration of renewable energy technologies, both in the design of new buildings and through the appropriate retrofitting of such technologies to existing buildings. For many buildings this will mean increased consideration of the benefits of small-scale renewable energy technologies.*

*This is referred to as 'micro-generation' and is widely accepted to be the production of heat and/or electricity from low or zero carbon energy sources.*

*New large-scale urban, public sector and rural development proposals can maximise the benefits that can be derived from integrated renewable technology.*

*Some forms of micro-generation development currently benefit from permitted development rights under the Planning (General Permitted Development) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015. This legislation should be referred to when considering the retrofitting of small scale renewable energy development.*

**Regional Policy Context**

29. The SPPS Edition 2 was published in December 2025. It is the most recent planning policy, and it is stated at paragraph 1.5 that:

*The provisions of the SPPS apply to the whole of Northern Ireland. They must be taken into account in the preparation of Local Development Plans (LDP) and are material to all decisions on individual planning applications and appeals.*

30. Paragraph 2.1 of the SPPS recognises that an objective of the planning system is to secure the orderly and consistent development of land whilst furthering sustainable development and improving well-being.

31. It states that:

*The system should positively and proactively facilitate development that contributes to a more socially economically and environmentally sustainable Northern Ireland. Planning authorities should therefore simultaneously pursue social and economic priorities alongside the careful management of our built and natural environments for the overall benefit of our society.*

32. Paragraph 3.6 of the SPPS states:

*planning authorities should make efficient use of existing capacities of land, buildings and infrastructure, including support for town centre and regeneration priorities in order to achieve sustainable communities where people want to live, work and play now and into the future. Identifying previously developed land within settlements including sites which may have environmental constraints (e.g. land contamination), can assist with the return to productive use of vacant or underused land. This can help deliver more attractive environments, assist with economic regeneration and renewal, and reduce the need for green field development.*

33. Paragraph 3.8 of the SPSS states:

*that the guiding principle for planning authorities in determining planning applications is that sustainable development should be permitted, having regard to the development plan and all other material considerations, unless the proposed development will cause demonstrable harm to interests of acknowledged importance.*

34. In practice this means that development which accords with an up-to-date development plan should be approved and proposed development that conflicts with an up-to-date development plan should be refused, unless other material considerations indicate otherwise.

35. Paragraph 6.267 states:

*Town centres are important hubs for a range of land uses and activities, and can have a positive impact on those who live, work and visit them. They provide a wide variety of retailing and related facilities, including employment, leisure and cultural uses.*

36. It also advises that the aim of the SPSS is to support and sustain vibrant town centres across Northern Ireland through the promotion of established town centres as the appropriate first choice location of retailing and other complementary functions, consistent with the RDS.

37. The regional strategic objectives for town centres and retailing are to:

- *Secure a town centres first approach for the location of future retailing and other main town centre uses*
- *Adopt a sequential approach to the identification of retail and main town centre uses in Local Development Plans (LDPs) and when decision-taking:*
- *Ensure LDPs and decisions are informed by robust and up to date evidence in relation to need and capacity*
- *Protect and enhance diversity in the range of town centre uses appropriate to their role and function, such as leisure, cultural and community facilities, housing and business*

- *Promote high quality design to ensure that town centres provide sustainable, attractive, accessible and safe environments; and*
- *Maintain and improve accessibility to and within the town centre*

38. Paragraph 6.281 states:

*Planning authorities will require applications for main town centre uses to be considered in the following order of preference (and consider all of the proposals catchment):*

- *Primary retail core*
- *Town centres*
- *Edge of centre*
- *Out of centre locations, only where sites are accessible by a choice of good public transport modes.*

## Assessment

### Town Centres, Retailing and Other Uses

39. As noted above, the site is within the settlement development limit of Carryduff, however, this sits outside the designated Town Centre for Carryduff, the boundary of which terminates 550 metres to the west along Comber Road and Church Road at the Carryduff Library. The site, therefore, is to be considered under Policy TC3, Town Centres.
40. Policy TC3 seeks to strengthen the role of the three primary towns, Carryduff, Royal Hillsborough and Moira, which serve a local population and offer a variety of services. It is further stated in Policy TC3 that planning permission will be granted for retail and other town centre uses where two criteria are met.
41. Proposals for town centre uses beyond a designated town centre boundary will only be granted planning permission in accordance with the sequential approach of Policy TC1 and where there would be no adverse impact on adjacent land uses.
42. A sequential approach establishes a hierarchy and preference for the location of retailing and town centre uses as they are considered to sustain and enhance the vitality and viability of town centres and their functions.
43. The provision of a sequential approach, through the submission of a sequential test, has the potential to demonstrate that a range of retailing and town centre uses could feasibly be accommodated outside of town centres that meet the community's needs.

44. No sequential test or statement of need was submitted with the application to demonstrate that this out of centre location would be appropriate and would not harm the vitality and viability of Carryduff town centre.
45. While the individual proposal may be considered an inconsequential pull on footfall and general attraction to Carryduff town centre, it is the cumulative effect of a proliferation of such retailing uses outside of a designated town centre that has the potential to affect the vitality and viability of said centres with the latent consequences being evidenced through increased rates of vacancy and dereliction in town centres.
46. A recent site visit to Carryduff town centre found that there is a vacant retail unit at 18-20 Queensway, Carryduff and vacant units are being advertised for rent at 33 Ballynahinch Road, Carryduff which advertise that the units are suitable for beauty uses. This demonstrates that the proposal outside of the town centre would have an adverse impact on the vitality and viability of Carryduff town centre.
47. Therefore, for the reasons set out in the preceding paragraphs it is considered that the proposal would harm the vitality and viability of Carryduff town centre which is contrary to the requirements of policies TC1 and TC3.

### **Economic Development**

48. The application site is designated for existing employment uses as set out in The Planning (Use Classes) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015. This designation pertains to lands at Carryduff Business Park and on lands further east along the Comber Road.
49. Policy ED7 Retention of Zoned Land and Economic Development states that development that would result in the loss of land or buildings zoned for economic development in a Local Development Plan to other uses will not be permitted. Unless the zoned land has been substantially developed for alternative uses.
50. There is a proliferation of storage and light and general industrial uses within this portion of Carryduff Business Park. It is not considered that there has been any substantial development of alternative uses and thus it is considered that there is no precedent for a departure in the use of this site or the wider zoning for uses other than for economic development purposes. A hairdressers is not considered to be an ancillary use required to service the existing employment uses.
51. A further exemption is permitted under Policy ED7 if the proposed used on such designated land is to be a B1 or Sui Generis employment use. The

barbering business would constitute a Class A1 Shop Use and therefore is not considered to benefit from this exemption.

52. On the wider site there is a proliferation of economic development uses and is zoned as such, with the Class A1 Shops use considered to be an incongruous addition.
53. In light of the above the proposal is not considered to be a use compatible with the purpose of the zoning and predominant economic use of the site. The proposal therefore does not comply with criteria a) of Policy ED7.
54. The proposal is of a modest scale. Given the proliferation of warehouses in the wider site, the material palette of the shipping container is not considered to be detrimental to the character of the area. In light of the above assessment the proposal could comply with criteria b) of Policy ED7.
55. In the same vein as above, the small scale of the use, structure and land in which is taken up, it is not considered to represent a significant diminution of the economic employment land on which it sits. Therefore, it is considered that the proposal could comply with criteria c) of Policy ED7.

### **Access, Movement and Parking**

56. The parking and access provisions are to remain as existing and utilise the existing access and parking facilities of the wider Carryduff Business Park.
57. These arrangements have been considered in conjunction with DfI Roads, who offered no objections. Having regard to the advice of DfI Roads, it is considered that there will be no detriment to road safety, nor will it significantly inconvenience the flow of vehicles, in compliance with Policy TRA2 of the Plan Strategy.
58. In this vein there are no alterations to the wider hardstanding allowing for an unhindered approach to the unit with no impediments to the surrounding parking and access from Comber Road in line with the aims of Policy TRA1.
59. Policy TRA7 seeks to ensure that developments provide an appropriate amount of car parking to service the proposal. Additionally, Policy TRA7 seeks to prevent a proliferation of parking with such requirements tailored to the specific need of the site it is to serve.
60. While the siting of the container means that three car parking spaces are lost ample parking provision was visible during an afternoon site visit.
61. It is considered that the loss of three parking spaces would not harm the operation of the businesses in the locality of the barber shop and that there was

adequate spaces available to meet the parking standard of two spaces for this proposal in accordance with Policy TRA7.

### Consideration of Representations

62. No representations were received in respect of the application.

### Conclusions

63. The application is presented to the Planning Committee with a recommendation to refuse as the proposal is contrary to the requirements of policies TC1 and TC3 of the Plan Strategy as the retention of this building will harm the vitality and viability of Carryduff town centre by allowing a retail use outside the town centre which has existing vacancies.
64. In addition, the proposal is contrary to the requirements of policy ED7 of the Plan Strategy that seeks to retain zoned land for economic development and is not considered to benefit from the exemptions as set out in the policy.

### Recommendations

65. It is recommended that planning permission is refused.

### Refusal Reasons

1. The proposal is contrary to Policies TC1 and TC3 of the Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council Plan Strategy in that it has not been demonstrated that a sequential approach has been adopted that identifies there are no suitable sites within the town centre and that the proposal would have no adverse impact on the vitality or viability of Carryduff Town Centre.
2. The proposal is contrary to Policy ED7 of the Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council Plan Strategy in that the proposal would result in the loss of land zoned for economic development in the Local Development Plan as the proposal is not compatible with the predominant economic use.

Site Location Plan LA05/2025/0539/F



|                     |  |
|---------------------|--|
| <b>Committee:</b>   | Planning Committee                       |
| <b>Date:</b>        | 2 February 2026                          |
| <b>Report from:</b> | Head of Planning and Capital Development |

|                  |   |
|------------------|---|
| <b>Item for:</b> | Noting  |
| <b>Subject:</b>  | Item 2 – Statutory Performance Indicators – December 2025 |

|     |  |
|-----|--|
| 1.0 | <p><b><u>Background</u></b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 sets out the legislative framework for development management in NI and provides that, from 1 April 2015, Councils now largely have responsibility for this planning function.</li> <li>2. The Department continues to have responsibility for the provision and publication of official statistics relating to the overall development management function, including enforcement. The quarterly and annual reports provide the Northern Ireland headline results split by District Council. This data provides Councils with information on their own performance in order to meet their own reporting obligations under the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.</li> </ol> <p><b><u>Key Issues</u></b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The Department for Infrastructure has provided the Council with monthly monitoring information against the three statutory indicators. A sheet is attached (<b>see Appendix</b>) summarising the position for each indicator for the month of December 2025.</li> <li>2. This data is unvalidated management information. The data has been provided for internal monitoring purposes only. They are not validated official statistics and should not be publicly quoted as such.</li> <li>3. Whilst there were only a small number of applications processed in December due to leave commitments Members will note that the performance against the statutory target for local applications for December 2025 was 16 weeks. This is another month that the processing times for local applications was below 30 weeks which is encouraging and evidence that the focus on reducing the number of older planning applications is continuing to be reflected in the average number of weeks taken to process applications.</li> <li>4. There was no opportunity to perform against the statutory target for major applications for December 2025 albeit more major applications are processed this year than received. Our performance in year to date is 46.2 weeks.</li> <li>5. Enforcement is reported separately on a quarterly basis but for completeness Members are advised that the Council remains on target to achieve the statutory target of processing 70% of cases within 39 weeks. In December 59.1% of cases were decided in 39 weeks.</li> </ol> |
|-----|--|

|     |  |    |
|-----|--|----|
| 2.0 | <b><u>Recommendation</u></b>   |    |
|     | It is recommended that the Committee notes the information in relation to the December 2025 Statutory Performance Indicators.  |    |
| 3.0 | <b><u>Finance and Resource Implications</u></b>  |    |
|     | There are no finance or resource implications.   |    |
| 4.0 | <b><u>Equality/Good Relations and Rural Needs Impact Assessments</u></b>   |    |
| 4.1 | Has an equality and good relations screening been carried out?   | No |
| 4.2 | Brief summary of the key issues identified and proposed mitigating actions <b><u>or</u></b> rationale why the screening was not carried out<br><br>This is a report outlining progress against statutory targets and EQIA is not required.       |    |
| 4.3 | Has a Rural Needs Impact Assessment (RNIA) been completed?   | No |
| 4.4 | Brief summary of the key issues identified and proposed mitigating actions <b><u>or</u></b> rationale why the screening was not carried out.<br><br>This is a report outlining progress against statutory targets and RNIA is not required.<br>. |    |

|                    |   |
|--------------------|---|
| <b>Appendices:</b> | Appendix 2 – Statutory Performance Indicators – December 2025 |
|--------------------|---|

Statutory targets monthly update - December 2025 (unvalidated management information)  
Lisburn and Castlereagh

| Major applications (target of 30 weeks) |                 |  |                                      |                                      | Local applications (target of 15 weeks) |                 |  |                                      | Cases concluded (target of 39 weeks) |  |               |   |                                    |                                      |
|---|-----------------|--|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---|-----------------|--|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|---------------|---|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
|   | Number received | Number decided/ withdrawn <sup>1</sup> | Average processing time <sup>2</sup> | % of cases processed within 30 weeks |   | Number received | Number decided/ withdrawn <sup>1</sup> | Average processing time <sup>2</sup> | % of cases processed within 15 weeks |  | Number opened | Number brought to conclusion <sup>3</sup> | "70%" conclusion time <sup>3</sup> | % of cases concluded within 39 weeks |
| April                                   | 1               | 1                                      | 27.4                                 | 100.0%                               |   | 50              | 81                                     | 47.6                                 | 17.3%                                |  | 29            | 13  | 96.2                               | 38.5%                                |
| May                                     | 3               | 2                                      | 119.2                                | 50.0%                                |   | 40              | 59                                     | 56.6                                 | 20.3%                                |  | 20            | 17  | 86.0                               | 52.9%                                |
| June                                    | 1               | 2                                      | 76.6                                 | 50.0%                                |   | 59              | 85                                     | 42.2                                 | 24.7%                                |  | 25            | 21  | 20.2                               | 81.0%                                |
| July                                    | 0               | 0                                      | -                                    | -                                    |   | 50              | 69                                     | 25.6                                 | 23.2%                                |  | 13            | 21  | 27.4                               | 76.2%                                |
| August                                  | 0               | 1                                      | 62.4                                 | 0.0%                                 |   | 61              | 52                                     | 27.5                                 | 23.1%                                |  | 15            | 13  | 45.4                               | 69.2%                                |
| September                               | 0               | 0                                      | -                                    | -                                    |   | 43              | 69                                     | 25.6                                 | 34.8%                                |  | 18            | 26  | 70.7                               | 57.7%                                |
| October                                 | 1               | 0                                      | -                                    | -                                    |   | 49              | 70                                     | 19.4                                 | 31.4%                                |  | 19            | 30  | 51.4                               | 60.0%                                |
| November                                | 0               | 0                                      | -                                    | -                                    |   | 59              | 69                                     | 33.8                                 | 23.2%                                |  | 20            | 15  | 41.6                               | 66.7%                                |
| December                                | 0               | 0                                      | -                                    | -                                    |   | 51              | 26                                     | 16.0                                 | 46.2%                                |  | 17            | 22  | 54.4                               | 59.1%                                |
| January                                 |                 |  |                                      |                                      |   |                 |  |                                      |                                      |  |               |   |                                    |                                      |
| February                                |                 |  |                                      |                                      |   |                 |  |                                      |                                      |  |               |   |                                    |                                      |
| March                                   |                 |  |                                      |                                      |   |                 |  |                                      |                                      |  |               |   |                                    |                                      |
| Year to date                            | 6               | 6                                      | 46.2                                 | 50.0%                                |   | 462             | 580                                    | 33.0                                 | 25.7%                                |  | 176           | 178                                       | 52.4                               | 62.9%                                |

Source: NI Planning Portal

Notes:

1. DCs, CLUDS, TPOS, NMCS and PADS/PANs have been excluded from all applications figures
2. The time taken to process a decision/withdrawal is calculated from the date on which an application is deemed valid to the date on which the decision is issued or the application is withdrawn. The median is used for the average processing time as any extreme values have the potential to inflate the mean, leading to a result that may not be considered as "typical".
3. The time taken to conclude an enforcement case is calculated from the date on which the complaint is received to the earliest date of the following: a notice is issued; proceedings commence; a planning application is received; or a case is closed. The value at 70% is determined by sorting data from its lowest to highest values and then taking the data point at the 70th percentile of the sequence.

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|---------------------|--|
| <b>Committee:</b>   | Planning Committee                       |
| <b>Date:</b>        | 2 February 2026                          |
| <b>Report from:</b> | Head of Planning and Capital Development |

|                  |   |
|------------------|---|
| <b>Item for:</b> | Noting  |
| <b>Subject:</b>  | Item 3 – Quarter 2 Statistical Bulletin – July to September 2025/26 |

## 1.0 **Background**

1. The Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 sets out the legislative framework for development management in NI and provides that, from 1 April 2015, Councils now largely have responsibility for this planning function.
2. The Department continues to have responsibility for the provision and publication of official statistics relating to the overall development management function, including enforcement. The quarterly and annual reports provide the Northern Ireland headline results split by District Council. This data provides Councils with information on their own performance in order to meet their own reporting obligations under the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.

## **Key Issues**

1. The DfI Northern Ireland Planning Statistics covering the second quarter of 2025/26 were published on 18 December 2025.
2. The Bulletin provides an overview of planning activity across Northern Ireland. It provides summary statistical information on Council progress across the three statutory targets for major development applications, local development applications and enforcement cases as laid out in the Local Government (Performance Indicators and Standards) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015.
3. A copy of the documents can be accessed via the link:  
  
<https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/publications/northern-ireland-planning-statistics-july-september-2025>
4. The bulletin notes that:
  - There were 2,369 planning applications received in Northern Ireland (NI) during the second quarter of 2025/26; a decrease of 0.4 percent on the previous quarter and a similar number as the same period a year earlier. This comprised of 2,336 local, 23 major applications and 1 regionally significant.
  - Application numbers are up by 15.8% in the Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council Area for Q2 of 2025/26 which was against the general trend in Northern Ireland for quarter two of this financial year.

- In the second quarter of 2025/26, 1953 planning applications were decided, a decrease of fifteen percent from the previous quarter and down by one percent from the same period a year earlier. Decisions were issued on 1928 local and 23 major applications during the most recent quarter.
- The number of applications decided in the Lisburn and Castlereagh Council Area is down by 6.6 percent in quarter two of 2025/26 which is not as high as the general trend in Northern Ireland and reflects a continued focus of ensuring applications were being managed during the summer holiday period.
- The average processing time for local applications brought to a decision or withdrawal during the first six months of 2025/26 was 19.2 weeks across all Councils. This exceeds the 15-week target but represents a slight increase from the average processing time reported for the same period a year earlier (18.6 weeks). Three of the 11 Councils were within the 15-week target after the first six months of 2025/26.
- There is a significant decrease in the number of weeks applications are in process in the Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council Area consistent with our performance improvement objectives for reducing processing times and the backlog of older applications. In quarter 2 2025/26 the processing time was 25.6 weeks. Which is a 10.3 week reduction in processing time from the same quarter in 2024/25 which was 35.9 weeks.
- The average processing time for major applications brought to a decision or withdrawal during the first six months of 2025/26 was 34.0 weeks across all Councils. This exceeds the 30-week target and is a decrease of six weeks compared with the same period a year earlier.
- This Council continues to demonstrate good performance in processing major applications when compared with other Councils across Northern Ireland. The numbers of applications falling into this category remain small. Three of the 11 Councils were within the 30-week target after the first six months of 2025/26.
- Across Councils 75.1% of enforcement cases were concluded within 39 weeks during the first six months of 2025/26. This represents an increase from the rate recorded in 2024/25 (68.4%). Individually, six of the 11 Councils were meeting the 70% target in after the first six months of 2025/26.
- Performance in this Council Area is average when compared with other Council areas and slightly down on last year. Changes are made to the structure of this team which will allow for improved performance in enforcement as we move towards year end.

**Recommendation**

It is recommended that the Committee notes the information in relation to the Quarter 2 Statistical Bulletin.

**Finance and Resource Implications**

There are no finance or resource implications.

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| 4.0 | <b><u>Equality/Good Relations and Rural Needs Impact Assessments</u></b>   |    |
| 4.1 | Has an equality and good relations screening been carried out?   | No |
| 4.2 | Brief summary of the key issues identified and proposed mitigating actions <u>or</u> rationale why the screening was not carried out<br><br>This is a report about Planning Statistics covering the second quarter of 2025/26 and EQIA is not required.  |    |
| 4.3 | Has a Rural Needs Impact Assessment (RNIA) been completed?   | No |
| 4.4 | Brief summary of the key issues identified and proposed mitigating actions <u>or</u> rationale why the screening was not carried out.<br><br>This is a report about Planning Statistics covering the second quarter of 2025/26 and RNIA is not required. |    |

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| Appendices: | N/A |
|-------------|-----|

|                     |  |
|---------------------|--|
| <b>Committee:</b>   | Planning Committee                       |
| <b>Date:</b>        | 2 February 2026                          |
| <b>Report from:</b> | Head of Planning and Capital Development |

|                  |   |
|------------------|---|
| <b>Item for:</b> | Noting                                      |
| <b>Subject:</b>  | Item 4 – Appeal Decision – LA05/2020/0991/O |

## 1.0 **Background**

1. An application for a site for a replacement dwelling, garage and associated siteworks on lands 120 metres west of St. Patrick's RC Church, 23a Barnfield Road, Lisburn was refused on 29 April 2025.
2. Notification that an appeal had been lodged with the Planning Appeals Commission was received on 28 August 2025.
3. The procedure followed in this instance was by written representation with a site visit by the Commission which took place on 25 November 2025.
4. The main issue in the appeal is whether the building can be replaced as a dwelling and a form of development which is acceptable in principle in the countryside.
5. In a decision received on 30 December 2025 the Commission confirmed that the appeal was dismissed.

## **Key Issues**

1. The key issue was whether as a minimum all the external walls of the building are substantially intact, and it is capable of being replaced.
2. All the parties agreed the end gables were substantially intact and the Commissioner agreed with the appellant that the rear elevation was also substantially intact.
3. However, the Commissioner agreed with the Council that large sections of the front elevation are missing to ground level and there was no built form above any window or door openings. The Commissioner observed that the head height of the entire front elevation was gone, no lintels are evident and there was significant deterioration of the wall to the sides of door and window openings.
4. The appellant argued that the walls were in a state of disrepair due to vandalism but the Commissioner noted that:

*‘..... the timeline as to when the damage occurred is unclear and it is difficult to ascertain the status and previous condition of the building prior to its deterioration. I have also not been provided with any further details, such as police crime reference numbers, supporting the appellant’s claims regarding anti-*

|     |   |    |
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|     | <p><i>social behaviour and the cause and extent of damage to the building that would persuade me that the appeal proposal satisfies the requirements of Policy COU3 in this respect.'</i></p> <p>5. The Commissioner did not attach any weight to the supplementary arguments made by the appellant that this was similar to other approved development elsewhere in the Council area and that a verbal commitment from an officer in 2017 that a replacement dwelling would be granted planning permission.</p> <p>6. The appeal decision is important in that it highlights the need for careful consideration of the facts of the case and that all the walls must be substantially intact to satisfy the requirement of the policy.</p> |    |
| 2.0 | <p><b><u>Recommendation</u></b></p> <p>It is recommended that the Committee notes the report and decision of the Commission in respect of this appeal.</p>  |    |
| 3.0 | <p><b><u>Finance and Resource Implications</u></b></p> <p>No cost claim was lodged by any party in this instance.</p>   |    |
| 4.0 | <p><b><u>Equality/Good Relations and Rural Needs Impact Assessments</u></b></p>   |    |
| 4.1 | Has an equality and good relations screening been carried out?  | No |
| 4.2 | <p>Brief summary of the key issues identified and proposed mitigating actions <b><u>or</u></b> rationale why the screening was not carried out</p> <p>This is a report updating the committee on a decision by the PAC and EQIA is not required.</p>  |    |
| 4.3 | Has a Rural Needs Impact Assessment (RNIA) been completed?  | No |
| 4.4 | <p>Brief summary of the key issues identified and proposed mitigating actions <b><u>or</u></b> rationale why the screening was not carried out.</p> <p>This is a report updating the committee on a decision by the PAC and RNIA is not required.</p>   |    |

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| <b>Appendices:</b> | Appendix 4 – Appeal Decision – LA05/2020/0991/O |
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Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council  
Local Planning Office

*By Email*

Our reference: **2025/A0054**  
Authority  
reference: **LA05/2020/0991/O**  
30 December 2025

Dear Sir / Madam

**Re:**

**Appellant name: Mr. Edward Phillips**

**Description: Site for a replacement dwelling, garage and associated siteworks**

**Location: 120m West of St Patrick's RC Church, 23a Barnfield Road, Lisburn**

Please find enclosed Commission decision on the above case.

Yours Sincerely,

Robert Reilly  
PACWAC Admin Team



# Appeal Decision

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E: [info@pacni.gov.uk](mailto:info@pacni.gov.uk)

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|                               |   |
|-------------------------------|---|
| <b>Appeal Reference:</b>      | 2025/A0054  |
| <b>Appeal by:</b>             | Edward Phillips   |
| <b>Appeal against:</b>        | The refusal of outline planning permission  |
| <b>Proposed Development:</b>  | Site for a replacement dwelling, garage and associated siteworks                      |
| <b>Location:</b>              | 120m West of St Patrick's RC Church, 23a Barnfield Road, Lisburn                      |
| <b>Planning Authority:</b>    | Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council  |
| <b>Application Reference:</b> | LA05/2020/0991/O  |
| <b>Procedure:</b>             | Written Representations with Accompanied Site Visit on 25 <sup>th</sup> November 2025 |
| <b>Decision by:</b>           | Commissioner Hannah Ellison, dated 30 <sup>th</sup> December 2025                     |

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## Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

## Reasons

2. The main issue is whether the development is acceptable in principle in the countryside.
3. Section 45(1) of the Planning Act (NI) 2011 (the Act) requires the Commission, in dealing with an appeal, to have regard to the Local Development Plan (LDP), so far as material to the application, and to any other material considerations. Section 6(4) of the Act states that where regard is to be had to the LDP, the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
4. The Strategic Planning Policy Statement for Northern Ireland 'Planning for Sustainable Development' (SPPS) is material to all decisions on individual planning applications and appeals and transitional arrangements are set out in it. On 11 December 2025, the Department for Infrastructure published the SPPS Edition 2 (SPPS2), which included new policy provisions on Renewable and Low Carbon Energy. The Preamble to the SPPS2 makes clear that all other policy provisions within the former SPPS are unchanged. Paragraph 1.9 of the SPPS2 states that where a council adopts its Plan Strategy, existing policy retained under the transitional arrangements shall cease to have effect in the district of that council.

5. The Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council Local Development Plan 2032 Plan Strategy (PS) has been adopted. The PS sets out the strategic policy framework for the Council area. In line with the transitional arrangements as set out in the Schedule to the Planning (Local Development Plan) Regulations (NI) 2015 (as amended), the Local Development Plan now becomes a combination of the Departmental Development Plan (DDP) and the PS read together.
6. The adoption of the Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan 2015 was declared unlawful by the Court of Appeal in May 2017. In this case, the DDP is therefore the Lisburn Area Plan 2001 (LAP). Draft Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan 2004 (dBMAP) was never adopted, thus it is not a DDP, however it may be material in certain circumstances.
7. In the LAP, the appeal site is located within part of the countryside designated as green belt. In dBMAP the appeal site also falls within the green belt. Both the LAP and dBMAP direct the reader to regional green belt policy in the Planning Strategy for Rural Northern Ireland (PSRNI). The PSRNI was superseded by a succession of regional planning policy which therefore took precedence over the green belt designations and related policy provisions contained in existing statutory and published draft development plans. Therefore, no determining weight can be attached to the LAP or dBMAP in this respect. Furthermore, as the Council has now adopted its PS, previously retained policies set out in the suite of regional Planning Policy Statements have now ceased to have effect within this Council area.
8. In dBMAP the appeal site is also covered by the Milltown Local Landscape Policy Area designation MN09. No objections were raised by the Council with respect to this designation and Policy ENV3 of dBMAP. Neither the LAP nor dBMAP contain any other policies material to the appeal development. As such, there is no conflict between the DDP and the PS insofar as they relate to this appeal and the proposal falls to be considered against the provisions of the most up to date operational policy which is contained in the PS.
9. Policy COU1 of the PS states that there are a range of types of development which in principle are considered to be acceptable in the countryside and that will contribute to the aims of sustainable development. It continues that details of operational policies relating to acceptable residential development proposals in the countryside are set out in policies COU2 to COU10. The Council's objections are in respect of Policy COU3 which states that planning permission will be granted for a replacement dwelling where the building to be replaced exhibits the essential characteristics of a dwelling and as a minimum all external structural walls are substantially intact.
10. This appeal seeks outline planning permission for the replacement of an existing building which is located within a rural area. It is set well back from Barnfield Road and accessed from a lengthy laneway which passes the listed buildings of St Patrick's RC Church and the Sexton's house. The appeal building is in a state of disrepair. Its roof is missing in its entirety and the walls, which consist of a mix of rubble stone, brick, blockwork and render, are

damaged in parts. There is evidence of a rear return, however two of its walls are missing almost in their entirety. The appeal building nevertheless retains features such as a chimney stack, fireplace, hearth and remnants of internal walls, and the window and door openings are of a domestic scale, all of which nod towards its former use as a dwellinghouse. Both parties are in agreement that the appeal building exhibits the essential characteristics of a dwelling.

11. Turning therefore to whether or not as a minimum all external structural walls are substantially intact, whilst the Council considers that the two gable walls of the existing building meet this requirement of Policy COU3, it considers that the front and rear elevations are not substantially intact, thus failing the policy read as a whole.
12. In respect of the front elevation, the Council drew my attention to the sections of collapsed wall adjacent and above the two windows on the left hand side of the doorway opening and the missing wall section over the doorway. The Council also highlighted the section of collapsed wall to the left of the right most window opening, indicating that what remains rises only slightly above ground level. The Council note that nothing remains above any of the window and door openings thus the head height of the building has gone entirely.
13. The appellant notes that whilst a triangular section of wall is missing adjacent to the right most window opening, it is important to recognise that the positioning of this lost section of wall is misleading given it is adjacent to the window opening. It is suggested that this, along with the other deteriorated parts, gives the impression that more of the elevation is missing. They stress it is important that the true net figure of missing wall is considered. The appellant also suggested that the traditional design of the building would have meant there was only a very limited section of wall above each of the window and door openings.
14. I observed that there are no lintels or section of wall above any of the window and door openings. There is also significant deterioration of the wall to the side of the right most window opening, as well as sizeable missing sections between the other openings, which can be ascertained from the lack of complete side surrounds to most of the openings. Whilst the largely intact gable walls may provide an indicator that the original height of the front elevation would have been limited, it is nevertheless the case that nothing remains above the openings. This, together with the other areas of the elevation which have deteriorated, persuades me that significant loss of the front elevation has occurred overall.
15. Given the above, I agree with the Council that a considerable amount of the front elevation is no longer complete or whole, such that I am satisfied that what remains of the front elevation cannot be described as being substantially intact.
16. With regards to the rear elevation, the Council note that, despite the extensive vegetation growing over this elevation, there is clear visual evidence of collapse, particularly around the window and door openings, and that there is

evidence that the wall next to southern gable has previously come down. They continue that a wall plate is not evident. The Council also drew my attention to the limited remains of the rear return.

17. I appreciate that only a side blockwork wall and limited brickwork elsewhere remain of the rear return. Whilst I agree that this element cannot be described as substantially intact, the requirement in Policy COU3 is that all external *structural* walls are substantially intact (emphasis added). It seems from the evidence before me that the rear return was a single skin, flat roof add-on which was not part of the original structure of the building. Indeed, what remains of this rear return does not appear to still have been attached to the remaining part of the building at the time of my site visit. As such, it was not a structural component of the building thus its condition has no bearing on whether the appeal development accords with Policy COU3.
18. The appellant indicated that the southern gable meets the wall plate at the original height and my attention was also drawn to the differences in ground level, which it was suggested gives the impression that part of the rear elevation is lower in height. Whilst there are no lintels or section of wall above the openings, the sections of wall between each appear to be of considerably greater height than those on the front elevation, bearing in mind that much of the rear elevation is dominated by vegetation. Furthermore, other than the rear door opening, which has suffered some loss to one side, and the extent of wall below the sill of the left most window opening (when viewed from the rear), which has deteriorated somewhat, the openings are generally clearly delineated.
19. All in all, what remains of the rear elevation is noticeably greater than the front elevation and I am content that the rear external structural wall of the building can be described as being substantially intact. Nevertheless, Policy COU3 is clear that as a minimum *all* external structural walls are substantially intact (emphasis added). Given my earlier conclusion on the front elevation, the appeal proposal fails to accord with this requirement of Policy COU3.
20. Policy COU3 of the PS also states that in cases where a dwelling has recently been destroyed, for example, through an accident or a fire, planning permission may be granted for a replacement dwelling. Evidence about the status and previous condition of the building and the cause and extent of the damage must be provided. The parties are in agreement that the plans before me are reflective of the building as it existed prior to an earlier planning application in 2017 for the replacement of the appeal building, and that the percentage of the building's walls which remain at the time of this appeal are less than is shown on the submitted plans.
21. The appellant suggests there have been various deliberate acts of vandalism within the appeal site and ongoing instances of anti-social behaviour over recent years, and prior to the 2017 application, which has led to damage of the appeal building. It is clear from my site visit that the condition of the building has deteriorated since the plans were drawn.

22. The appeal site is in a secluded location and has limited security, thus I accept it may be susceptible to trespassing and antisocial behavior, and any resultant damage. However, given that the plans are reflective of the building prior to the 2017 application, the timeline as to when the damage occurred is unclear and it is difficult to ascertain the status and previous condition of the building prior to its deterioration. I have also not been provided with any further details, such as police crime reference numbers, supporting the appellant's claims regarding anti-social behaviour and the cause and extent of damage to the building that would persuade me that the appeal proposal satisfies the requirements of Policy COU3 in this respect.
23. The appellant has referred to previous approvals for replacement dwellings at Ivy Hill, Lisburn and Kilwarlin Road, Hillsborough. It is suggested that these examples concerned buildings which had less intact structural walls than the appeal building. The Council state that they are not directly comparable to this appeal. Whilst I have been provided with planning application reference numbers and photographs, I cannot ascertain from this limited information whether the examples were, indeed, less intact than the appeal building or if the circumstances are directly comparable to this appeal. Therefore, the examples do not serve to justify the appeal proposal. For the reasoning given above, the appeal development does not comply with Policy COU3 of the PS.
24. The appellant has raised concerns in respect of the Council's processing of the planning applications at the appeal site. In particular, the evidence before me indicates that during the 2017 application the appellant was initially advised by a planning officer that the principle of a replacement dwelling was acceptable. I note however that the 2017 application was ultimately refused. Concerns were also raised in respect of the timeline of events and the planning committee process. Whilst I appreciate the appellant's frustrations, these are not matters for me within the context of this appeal, which I have determined on its own merits.
25. Given all of the above, the proposal conflicts with Policy COU3 and consequently Policy COU1 of the PS. The lack of objection on other matters from consultees does not justify the appeal development. The Council has therefore sustained its reason for refusal and the appeal must fail.

This decision is based on drawings 01, 02, 03, 04, 05 and 06 which were submitted with the planning application and received by the Council on 25<sup>th</sup> November 2020.

**COMMISSIONER HANNAH ELLISON**

**List of Appearances**

|                      |  |
|----------------------|--|
| Planning Authority:- | Peter McFadden<br>Barbara Hanna<br>(Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council (LCCC)) |
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| Appellant:- | Nigel Coffey (Agent)<br>Edward Phillips (Appellant) |
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**List of Documents**

|                      |  |
|----------------------|--|
| Planning Authority:- | Statement of Case and Rebuttal by LCCC |
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| Appellant:- | Statement of Case and Rebuttal by Nigel Coffey |
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| <b>Committee:</b>   | Planning Committee                       |
| <b>Date:</b>        | 2 February 2026                          |
| <b>Report from:</b> | Head of Planning and Capital Development |

|                  |  |
|------------------|--|
| <b>Item for:</b> | Decision   |
| <b>Subject:</b>  | Item 5 – Pre-application Notice (PAN) for proposed development of additional sport, leisure and tourism facilities at the Let's Go Hydro resort, comprising a centre of excellence for padel tennis (with ancillary lounge and bar), new gym and wellbeing facility, replacement of existing marquee padel tennis building with purpose built steel frame padel tennis building, golf driving range and indoor golf simulator facilities, together with internal signage, relocation of existing glamping pods/safari lodges/house boat and associated access, parking, fencing, netting, floodlighting, landscaping and site works at Lets Go Hydro 1 Mealough Road, Belfast. |

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| 1.0 | <p><b><u>Background</u></b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Section 27 of the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 requires a prospective applicant, prior to submitting a major application, to give notice to the appropriate Council that an application for planning permission is to be submitted.</li> </ol> <p><b><u>Key Issues</u></b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. Section 27 (4) of the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 stipulates what information a PAN must contain. The attached report sets out how the requirement of the legislation and associated guidance has been considered as part of the submission.</li> <li>3. Section 27(5) of the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 also stipulates that regulations may require that the PAN be given to persons specified in the regulations and prescribe (i)the persons who are to be consulted as respects a proposed application, and (ii)the form that consultation is to take.</li> <li>4. It is stated in the Planning (Development Management) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 as amended by the Planning (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2025 that the prospective applicant must:                         <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) hold at least one public event in the locality in which the proposed development is situated where members of the public may make comments to the prospective applicant as regards the proposed development; maintain a website to display details of the proposed development and facilitate comments from members of the public relating to the proposed development; and</li> <li>b) publish in a newspaper circulating in the locality in which the proposed development is situated a notice containing (i)a description of, and the location of, the proposed development, (ii)details as to where further information may be obtained concerning the proposed development, (iii)the date, time and place of the public event, (iv)a statement explaining how, and</li> </ol> </li> </ol> |
|-----|--|

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|     | <p>by when, persons wishing to make comments to the prospective applicant relating to the proposal may do so, (v) a statement that comments made to the prospective applicant are not representations to the council or as the case may be the Department and if the prospective applicant submits an application there will be an opportunity to make representations on that application to the council or as the case may be the Department at a later stage, (vi) details of the website maintained in accordance with 2(a), and (vii) the period of time to display details of the proposed development on the website.</p> |    |
| 2.0 | <p><b><u>Recommendation</u></b></p> <p>It is recommended that the Members note the information on the content of the Pre-application Notice attached and agree that it is submitted in accordance with the relevant sections of the legislation and related guidance.</p>  |    |
| 3.0 | <p><b><u>Finance and Resource Implications</u></b></p> <p>There are no finance and resource implications.</p>  |    |
| 4.0 | <p><b><u>Equality/Good Relations and Rural Needs Impact Assessments</u></b></p>  |    |
| 4.1 | Has an equality and good relations screening been carried out?   | No |
| 4.2 | <p>Brief summary of the key issues identified and proposed mitigating actions <u>or</u> rationale why the screening was not carried out</p> <p>This is a report in relation to the serving of a Pre-Application Notice on the Council in relation to a major application. EQIA is not required.</p>  |    |
| 4.3 | Has a Rural Needs Impact Assessment (RNIA) been completed?   | No |
| 4.4 | <p>Brief summary of the key issues identified and proposed mitigating actions <u>or</u> rationale why the screening was not carried out.</p> <p>This is a report in relation to the serving of a Pre-Application Notice on the Council in relation to a major application. RNIA is not required.</p>   |    |

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| <b>Appendices:</b> | <p><b>Appendix 5(a)</b> - Report in relation to LA05/2025/0907/PAN</p> <p><b>Appendix 5(b)</b> – LA05/2025/0907/PAN – PAN Form</p> <p><b>Appendix 5(c)</b> – LA05/2025/0907/PAN – Site Location Plan</p> |
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## Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council

|                     |  |
|---------------------|--|
| Council/Committee   | Planning Committee                                     |
| Date of Meeting     | 2 February 2026  |
| Responsible Officer | Conor Hughes   |
| Date of Report      | 19 January 2026  |
| File Reference      | LA05/2025/0907/PAN                                     |
| Legislation         | Section 27 of the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 |
| Subject             | Pre-Application Notice (PAN)                           |
| Attachments         | PAN Form and Site Location Plan                        |

### Purpose of the Report

1. The purpose of this report is to advise Members of receipt of a Pre-Application Notice (PAN) for a proposed development of additional sport, leisure and tourism facilities at the Let's Go Hydro resort, comprising a centre of excellence for padel tennis (with ancillary lounge and bar), new gym and wellbeing facility, replacement of existing marquee padel tennis building with purpose built steel frame padel tennis building, golf driving range and indoor golf simulator facilities, together with internal signage structure, relocation of existing glamping pods/safari lodges/house boat and associated access, parking, fencing, netting, floodlighting, landscaping and site works at Lets Go Hydro 1 Mealough Road, Belfast.

### Background Detail

2. Section 27 of the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 requires that a prospective applicant, prior to submitting a major application must give notice to the appropriate council that an application for planning permission for the development is to be submitted.
3. It is stipulated that there must be at least 12 weeks between the applicant giving the notice (through the PAN) and submitting any such application.
4. The PAN for the above-described development was received on 15 December 2025. The earliest possible date for the submission of a planning application is week commencing 16 March 2025.

### Consideration of PAN Detail

5. Section 27 (4) stipulates that the PAN must contain:

**A description in general terms of the development to be carried out.**

6. The description associated with the FORM PAN1 is as described above.
7. Having regard to the relevant section of the legislation and bullet point 1 of paragraph 2.4 of Development Management Practice Note 10, it is considered that an adequate description of the proposed development has been provided.

**The postal address of the site, (if it has one).**

8. The postal address identified on the FORM PAN1 is as described above.
9. Having regard to the relevant section of the legislation and bullet point 2 of paragraph 2.4 of Development Management Practice Note 10, it is accepted that an adequate description of the location has been provided.

**A plan showing the outline of the site at which the development is to be carried out and sufficient to identify that site.**

10. Having regard to the relevant section of the legislation and bullet point 3 of paragraph 2.4 of Development Management Practice Note 10, it is accepted that a site location plan with the extent of the site outlined in red and submitted with the PAN form is sufficient to identify the extent of the site.

**Details of how the prospective applicant may be contacted and corresponded with.**

11. Having regard to the relevant section of the legislation and bullet point 4 of paragraph 2.4 of Development Management Practice Note 10 it is noted that the FORM PAN1 as amended and associated covering letter includes details of how the prospective applicant may be contacted and corresponded with.
12. The Form PAN1 includes the name and address of the agent. Any person wishing to make comments on the proposals or obtain further information can contact the agent O'Toole & Starkey Ltd, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor River House, 48-60 High Street, Belfast, BT1 2BE.
13. In addition to the matters listed above, regulation 4 of the Planning (Development Management) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 sets out that a PAN must also contain the following.

**A copy (where applicable) of any determination made under Regulation 7 (1)(a) of the Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 in relation to the development to which the proposal of application notice relates.**

14. Having regard to the relevant section of the legislation and bullet point 1 of paragraph 2.5 of Development Management Practice Note 10 that the FORM PAN 1 indicates that no environmental impact assessment determination has been made.
15. It is accepted that this reference is made without prejudice to any future determination being made or the applicant volunteering an Environmental Statement.

**A copy of any notice served by the Department under Section 26(4) or (6) i.e. confirmation (or not) of the Department's jurisdiction on regionally significant developments.**

16. Having regard to the relevant section of the legislation and bullet point 2 of paragraph 2.5 of Development Management Practice Note 10 it is considered that the form of development proposed is not specified in the Planning (Development Management) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 as a major development (i.e. regionally significant) prescribed for the purpose of section 26 (1) of the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 and it is noted that consultation with the Department has not taken place.

**An account of what consultation the prospective applicant proposes to undertake, when such consultation is to take place, with whom and what form it will take.**

17. Having regard to the relevant section of the legislation and bullet point 3 of paragraph 2.5 of Development Management Practice Note 10 the account of what consultation the prospective applicant proposes to undertake, when such consultation is to take place, with whom and what form it will take has been provided.

The PAN form indicates that a public consultation event fully staffed will take place between at 4pm on 22 January 2026. The venue identified on the PAN form is the Ivanhoe Hotel, 556 Saintfield Road, Carryduff.

The event will be published in the Belfast Telegraph starting on 13 January 2026.

A notification letter will issue to all properties within 100 metres of the site boundary on or before 14 January 2026. Information relating to the proposed development will be available to view online at [www.otsplanning.com/hydro](http://www.otsplanning.com/hydro) during the period 22 January 2026 to 22 February 2026.

A copy of the Notice has also issued to Elected Members of the DEA and others as identified on the PAN form on 15 December 2025.

### Recommendation

18. In consideration of the detail submitted with the Pre-Application Notice (PAN) in respect of community consultation, it is recommended that the Committee agrees the information is submitted in accordance with the legislation and related guidance.



[www.lisburncastlereagh.gov.uk/resident/planning](http://www.lisburncastlereagh.gov.uk/resident/planning)

Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council, Civic Headquarters, Lagan Valley Island, Lisburn, BT27 4RL

Tel: 028 9244 7300

E-mail: [planning@lisburncastlereagh.gov.uk](mailto:planning@lisburncastlereagh.gov.uk)

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## Proposal of application notice

### Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011

#### Publication of applications on planning authority websites

Please note that the information provided on this application form and in supporting documents may be published on the Authority's website. If you require any further clarification, please contact the Authority's planning department.

Are you an agent acting on behalf of the applicant?

☒ Yes

☐ No

#### Applicant Details

Name/Company

Title

First name

Surname

Company Name

#### Address

Address line 1

Address line 2

Address line 3

Town/City

BT1 1FB

Country

United Kingdom

237

Contact Details

Telephone number

Mobile number

Email address

Agent Details

Name/Company

Company / Organisation

O'Toole & Starkey Ltd

Title

First name

Brendan

Surname

Starkey

Address

Address line 1

1st Floor - River House

Address line 2

48-60 High Street

Address line 3

Town/City

Belfast

Postcode

BT1 2BE

United Kingdom

Contact Details

238

Telephone number

07988903402

Mobile number

Email address

brendan@otsplanning.com

Ref no.

Site Address

**Disclaimer:** Recommendations can only be based on the answers given to the questions.

If you cannot provide a postcode, then further details must be provided below for 'Description of site location' by providing the most accurate site description you can in order to help locate the site.

Number

Suffix

-

Property Name

Lets Go Hydro

Address Line 1

1 Mealough Road

Address Line 2

Town/city

Belfast

Postcode

BT8 8GB

Description of site location (only complete if postcode is not known)

Description

Easting co-ordinates (x)

336399

366034

### Site Area

What is the area of the site?

15

Hectares

Please note - due to the size of site area this application may also be subject to the completion of an Environmental Impact Assessment report (EIA).

Please give a concise and accurate description of all elements of the proposed development that requires consent, including the purpose for which the land / buildings are to be used. Provide details of all buildings proposed and any ancillary works including access arrangements associated with the proposal. Please also include details of any demolition if the site falls within a designated area.

### Description of Proposed Development

Please give a brief description of the proposed development

Proposed development of additional sport, leisure and tourism facilities at the existing Let's Go Hydro resort, comprising: a centre of excellence for padel tennis (with ancillary lounge and bar), new gym and wellbeing facility, replacement of existing marquee padel tennis building with purpose built steel frame padel tennis building, golf driving range and indoor golf simulator facilities, together with internal signage structure, relocation of existing glamping pods/safari lodges/house boat and associated access, parking, fencing, netting, floodlighting, landscaping and site works

Please indicate what type of application is being requested

- ☐ Outline permission
- ☒ Full permission

### Floorspace Summary

Does the proposal include floorspace?

- ☒ Yes
- ☐ No

What is the total gross floor space of proposed development (sq m)?

3500

### Renewable Energy

Does your proposal involve renewable energy development?

- ☐ Yes
- ☒ No

### Determinations

Has a determination been made as to whether the proposed development would be of Regional Significance?

- ☐ Yes
- ☒ No

- ☐ Yes
- ☒ No

Details of Proposed Consultation

Please add separate details for each proposed consultation

Proposed public event: Public exhibition

Venue: Ivanhoe Hotel, 556 Saintfield Rd, Carryduff, BT8 8EU

Date and time: 22/01/2026 16:00

Please add separate details for each publication used for the above consultation

Publication

Name of publication Belfast Telegraph

Proposed advert date start 13/01/2026

Proposed advert date finish 13/01/2026

Please specify details of any website and any other consultation methods including distance from site for notifying neighbouring properties (e.g. 100m, 200m etc.) and method of notification (please include date, time and with whom)

Information relating to the proposed development will be available to view online at [www.otsplanning.com/hydro](http://www.otsplanning.com/hydro) during the period 22/01/26 to 22/02/26

Leaflets will be delivered to all neighbouring residential properties within 100m of the application site on or before 14/01/26

Details of any other publicity methods (e.g. leaflets, posters)

Details of Other Parties Receiving a copy of this PAN

Are there any other parties receiving a copy of this PAN?

- ☒ Yes
- ☐ No

Please state which other parties have received a copy of this Proposal of Application Notice

Details for elected member(s) for District Electoral Area

Elected member(s) for District Electoral Area:

Castlereagh South DEA Members: Daniel Bassett; Ryan Carlin; John Gallen; Jamie Harpur; Brian Higginson; Martin McKeever; Bronagh Magee

Date notice served:

15/12/2025

**Other(s):**  
Mealough Development Consortium

**Date notice served:**  
15/12/2025

Authority Employee/Member

Are you/the applicant/applicant's spouse or partner, a member of staff within the council or an elected member of the council?

☐ Yes

☒ No

Are you/the applicant/the applicant's spouse or partner, a relative of a member of staff in the council or an elected member of the council or their spouse or partner?

☐ Yes

☒ No

It is an important principle of decision-making that the process is open and transparent.

Declaration

The information I / We have given is correct and complete to the best of my knowledge and belief.

☒ I / We agree to the outlined declaration

Signed

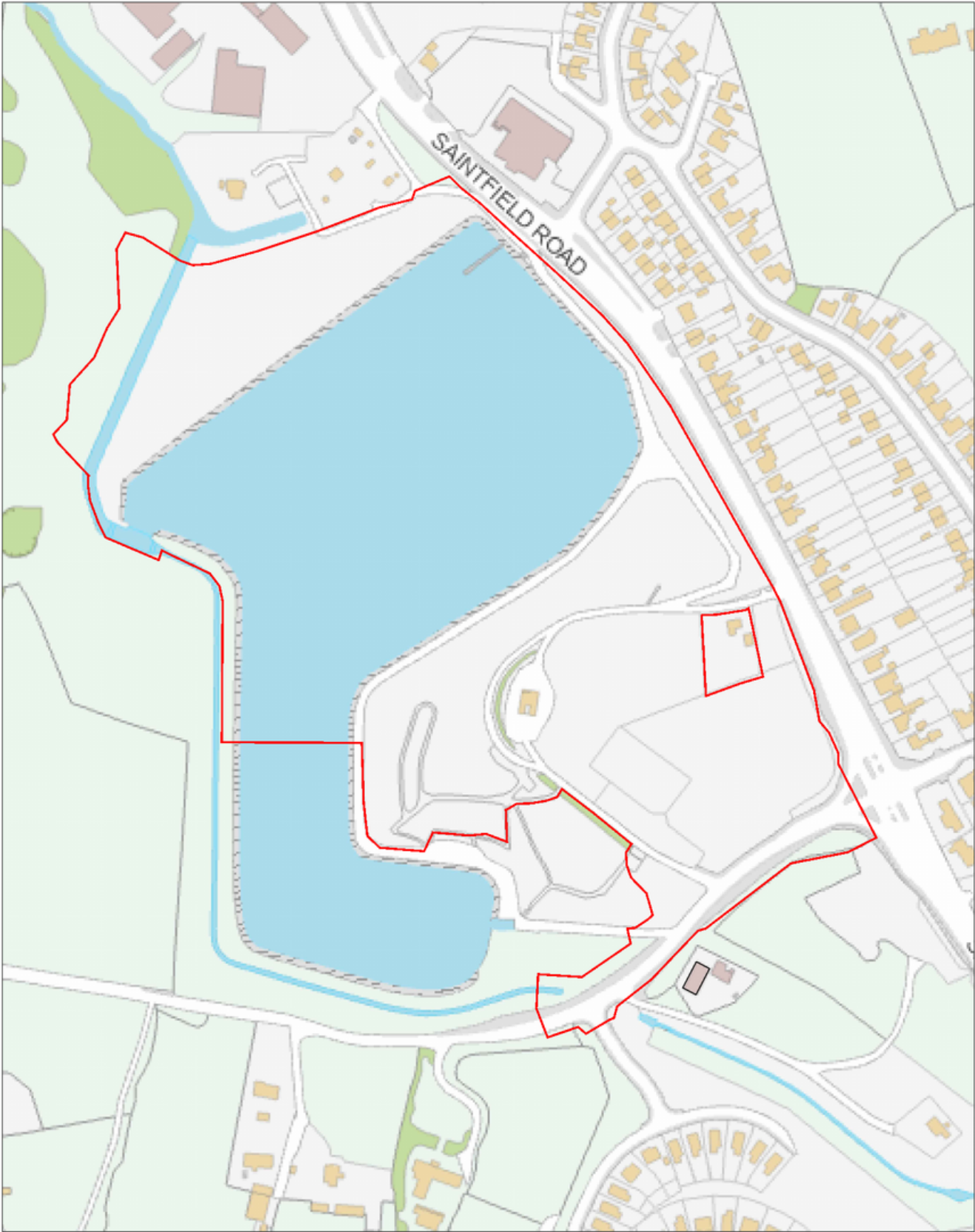
BRENDAN STARKEY

Date

15/12/2025

This information may be shared with other departments within the authority for the purposes of promoting investment. Please indicate by ticking the box below that you are providing your personal data on the basis of consent and are positively agreeing that it is shared with these departments and used for the purpose described, who may contact you and consider tailored support to meet your needs. Please note that availing of this service will have no influence on the planning process or the likelihood of you receiving planning permission.

☐ I consent for my personal data to be shared with other departments within the authority



|  |  |   |         |             |          |       |         |              |
|--|--|---|---------|-------------|----------|-------|---------|--------------|
| LETS GO HYDRO  |  | PROJECT                                 |         |             |          |       |         |              |
|  |  | Lets Go Hydro - 1 Mealough Road BT8 8GB |         |             |          |       |         |              |
|  |  | DRAWING TITLE                           |         |             |          |       |         | SCALE 1:2500 |
| 7-19 Royal Avenue Belfast BT1 4FB<br>T: 07787316668<br>EMAIL: paul.elliott@argento.com |  | Site Location Plan                      |         |             |          |       |         | PAPER A3     |
|  |  | ISSUE.                                  | JOB NO. | DRAWING NO. | REVISION | DRAWN | CHECKED | DATE         |
|  |  | -                                       | -       | SLP-01      |          | PE    | PE      | 15/12/25     |

|                     |  |
|---------------------|--|
| <b>Committee:</b>   | Planning Committee                       |
| <b>Date:</b>        | 2 February 2026                          |
| <b>Report from:</b> | Head of Planning and Capital Development |

|                  |  |
|------------------|--|
| <b>Item for:</b> | Noting   |
| <b>Subject:</b>  | Item 6 – Notification by telecommunication operator(s) of intention to utilise permitted development rights. |

|     |   |
|-----|---|
| 1.0 | <p><b><u>Background</u></b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The Council is notified by Cornerstone and Openreach, of their intention to utilise permitted development rights to install communications apparatus at three separate locations within the Council area.</li> <li>2. The works consist of the installation of broadband and telecommunication apparatus, upgrades to existing radio base stations and alteration or replacement of a mast or antenna in accordance with Part 18 (Development by Electronic Communications Code Operators) F31 of the Planning (General Permitted Development) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015.</li> </ol> <p><b><u>Key Issues</u></b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The notifications advise the Council of the location of the apparatus where they intend to utilise permitted development rights. Detail is also provided in relation to the nature and scale of the works proposed.</li> <li>2. Only the schedule of locations where the works are proposed has been appended to the report (<b>see Appendix</b>). However, the content of notifications detailed above are provided separately on Decision Time to assist Members in understanding the scope and nature of the proposed works.</li> <li>3. No comment is provided on the requirement for planning permission for the equipment listed. This letter is also referred to the enforcement section of the Unit. They will write separately to the operator should it be considered that the requirements of the Regulations cannot be met at any of the locations specified.</li> </ol> |
| 2.0 | <p><b><u>Recommendation</u></b></p> <p>It is recommended that Members note the detail of the notifications specific to the sites identified.</p>  |
| 3.0 | <p><b><u>Finance and Resource Implications</u></b></p> <p>There are no finance or resource implications.</p>  |

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|-----|--|----|
| 4.0 | <b><u>Equality/Good Relations and Rural Needs Impact Assessments</u></b>   |    |
| 4.1 | Has an equality and good relations screening been carried out?   | No |
| 4.2 | <p>Brief summary of the key issues identified and proposed mitigating actions <b><u>or</u></b> rationale why the screening was not carried out</p> <p>This is a report providing notification by telecommunication operator(s) of intention to utilise permitted development rights. EQIA not required.</p>  |    |
| 4.3 | Has a Rural Needs Impact Assessment (RNIA) been completed?   | No |
| 4.4 | <p>Brief summary of the key issues identified and proposed mitigating actions <b><u>or</u></b> rationale why the screening was not carried out.</p> <p>This is a report providing notification by telecommunication operator(s) of intention to utilise permitted development rights. RNIA not required.</p> |    |

|                    |   |
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| <b>Appendices:</b> | Appendix 6 – Notifications from an Operator in respect of intention to utilise permitted development rights |
|--------------------|---|

**List of Notifications from Telecommunication Operators in relation to intentions to utilise Permitted Development Rights  
February Planning Committee**

|    | Applicant/Agents | Operator         | Location                               | Summary of details  | Date received |
|----|------------------|------------------|--|---|---------------|
| 1. | Cornerstone      | WHP Telecoms Ltd | Bentrim Centre, Bentrim Road, Lisburn  | Permitted development rights for proposed base station                      | 04/12/2025    |
| 2. | Openreach        | BT               | 7 Old Road, Ballinderry Upper, Lisburn | Regulation 5 Notice of Intention to Install Fixed Line Broadband Apparatus. | 16/12/2025    |
| 3. | Openreach        | BT               | 24, Tullyrusk Road, Dundrod, Crumlin   | Regulation 5 Notice of Intention to Install Fixed Line Broadband Apparatus. | 17/12/2025    |
| 4. | Openreach        | BT               | 35 Kilwarlin Road, Hillsborough        | Regulation 5 Notice of Intention to Install Fixed Line Broadband Apparatus  | 22/12/2025    |

|                     |  |
|---------------------|--|
| <b>Committee:</b>   | Planning Committee                       |
| <b>Date:</b>        | 2 February 2026                          |
| <b>Report from:</b> | Head of Planning and Capital Development |

|                  |  |
|------------------|--|
| <b>Item for:</b> | Decision   |
| <b>Subject:</b>  | Item 07 – NILGA Planning Learning and Engagement Programme – Request for Nominations |
|                  |  |

## 1.0 **Background**

1. The Northern Ireland Local Government Association (NILGA) in co-ordination with the Department for Infrastructure (DfI) has written to advise that they are seeking nominations for a Task and Finish Advisory Group for Councillors drawn from across all councils.
2. NILGA state the purpose of the advisory group is to develop an enhanced and coordinated approach to planning learning, engagement and continuous improvement for Councillors, which places Elected Members at the centre of planning improvement activity.

### **Key Issues**

1. NILGA describe planning as one of the most significant and high-profile functions exercised by local government, and the role of Councillors in planning decision-making is critical to ensuring outcomes that are lawful, robust, transparent and reflective of local priorities.
2. Highlighting the increasingly complex nature of decision making NILGA explains in the letter that there is a clear need for stronger, more consistent engagement with Elected Members across all councils and propose:
  - A blended programme of learning and engagement for Councillors, combining:
    - Short, accessible written and digital learning materials;
    - Thematic online engagement sessions on emerging, specialist and high-risk planning issues;
    - In-person engagement with individual Planning Committees focused on development management, decision-making and good practice;
  - Improved sharing of good practice between councils, recognising the value of learning from different committee structures, schemes of delegation and approaches to member-officer working; and
  - Stronger alignment between councillor learning, officer development and the Department's Planning Improvement Programme.
3. It is stated that the proposed approach is designed to support councillors across all councils to exercise their planning responsibilities with confidence and consistency through ongoing, structured engagement between DfI, NILGA and Elected Members on planning improvement, reform and future challenges, including engagement with the Infrastructure Minister as appropriate.

|     |   |    |
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|     | <p>4. NILGA advise that the group will play a key advisory role in shaping the learning and engagement programme, ensuring it reflects the realities faced by Planning Committees, and helping to identify priority areas where councillor leadership and shared learning can make the greatest impact.</p> <p>5. NILGA seek the nomination of up to two Councillors to the task and finish advisory group which should be submitted by 28 February 2026.</p> |    |
| 2.0 | <p><b><u>Recommendation</u></b></p> <p>It is recommended that Members consider the request for nominations to allow a response to be returned on behalf of the Chair before 28 February 2026.</p>   |    |
| 3.0 | <p><b><u>Finance and Resource Implications</u></b></p> <p>N/A</p>   |    |
| 4.0 | <p><b><u>Equality/Good Relations and Rural Needs Impact Assessments</u></b></p>   |    |
| 4.1 | Has an equality and good relations screening been carried out?  | No |
| 4.2 | <p>Brief summary of the key issues identified and proposed mitigating actions <u>or</u> rationale why the screening was not carried out</p> <p>EQIA not required.</p>   |    |
| 4.3 | Has a Rural Needs Impact Assessment (RNIA) been completed?  | No |
| 4.4 | <p>Brief summary of the key issues identified and proposed mitigating actions <u>or</u> rationale why the screening was not carried out.</p> <p>RNIA not required.</p>  |    |

|                    |                                |
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| <b>Appendices:</b> | Appendix 7 – Letter from NILGA |
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**Sent by email only to:**

Chair of Council Planning Committees

cc: Council Chief Executives  
Council Heads of Planning

13 January 2026

Dear Chair,

**Planning Learning and Engagement Programme – Request for Nominations**

On behalf of the NILGA Executive, we are writing to you in your capacity as Chair of the Planning Committee to seek your Council's active involvement in a strategically important piece of work being jointly progressed by the Department for Infrastructure (DfI) and the Northern Ireland Local Government Association (NILGA).

Planning is one of the most significant and high-profile functions exercised by local government, and the role of councillors in planning decision-making is critical to ensuring outcomes that are lawful, robust, transparent and reflective of local priorities. Against a backdrop of increasing complexity, public scrutiny and challenge within the planning system, there is a clear need for stronger, more consistent engagement with elected members across all councils.

DfI and NILGA are therefore developing an enhanced and coordinated approach to **planning learning, engagement and continuous improvement for councillors**, which places elected members at the centre of planning improvement activity. This work builds on ongoing engagement with councillors, the Department's Planning Improvement Programme, and the Minister's clear support for deeper, more structured engagement with elected members and closer partnership working with NILGA.

**Proposed approach**

The proposed approach is designed to support councillors across all councils to exercise their planning responsibilities with confidence and consistency, and will include:

- Ongoing, structured engagement between DfI, NILGA and elected members on planning improvement, reform and future challenges, including engagement with the Infrastructure Minister as appropriate.
- A blended programme of learning and engagement for councillors, combining:
  - Short, accessible written and digital learning materials;
  - Thematic online engagement sessions on emerging, specialist and high-risk planning issues;
  - In-person engagement with individual Planning Committees focused on development management, decision-making and good practice;

**Northern Ireland Local Government Association**

Bradford Court, Upper Galwally, Castlereagh, BT8 6RB

Tel: 028 9079 8972 email: [office@nilga.org](mailto:office@nilga.org) web: [www.nilga.org](http://www.nilga.org) twitter: @NI\_LGA

- Improved sharing of good practice between councils, recognising the value of learning from different committee structures, schemes of delegation and approaches to member–officer working; and
- Stronger alignment between councillor learning, officer development and the Department's Planning Improvement Programme.

### Task and Finish Advisory Group

Central to the success of this work is meaningful input from councillors who are directly involved in Planning Committee decision-making. To that end, DfI and NILGA propose to establish a **Task and Finish Advisory Group of councillors drawn from across all councils**.

This group will play a key advisory role in shaping the learning and engagement programme, ensuring it reflects the realities faced by Planning Committees, and helping to identify priority areas where councillor leadership and shared learning can make the greatest impact. Representation from across councils will be essential to ensure the work is informed by a broad range of local contexts, experiences and challenges.

We would therefore request that you to **nominate up to two councillors** from your Planning Committee to participate in this Advisory Group. Nominees should be a current Planning Committee member, have experience of Planning Committee work and a willingness to contribute constructively to regional planning improvement on behalf of local government.

The Advisory Group will operate on a time-limited basis and it is expected to meet a number of times during 2026. Given the regional nature of this work and pressures on councillors' time, it is expected that online attendance can be facilitated if needed.

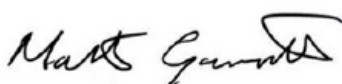
We would be grateful if nominations could be submitted by **28 February 2026** including the name, role and contact details of each nominee.

Your Council's engagement in this work will be vital to ensuring that the resulting approach is credible, relevant and firmly rooted in elected member experience. We look forward to working closely with you and your nominated members as this important programme is taken forward.

Yours sincerely



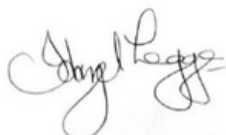
**Cllr Billy Webb, MBE JP**  
**President (All)**



**Cllr Matt Garrett**  
**Vice-President (Sinn Féin)**



**Cllr Alison Bennington**  
**Vice-President (DUP)**



**Ald Hazel Legge**  
**Vice-President (UUP)**



**Cllr Carl Whyte**  
**Vice-President (SDLP)**

**Northern Ireland Local Government Association**

Bradford Court, Upper Galwally, Castlereagh, BT8 6RB

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