

LISBURN & CASTLEREAGH CITY COUNCIL

Minutes of Planning Committee Meeting held in the Council Chamber and in Remote Locations on Monday, 2 June, 2025 at 10.02 am

PRESENT IN CHAMBER:

Alderman M Gregg (Chair)

Councillor S Burns (Vice-Chair)

Aldermen O Gawith and J Tinsley

Councillors P Catney, U Mackin, A Martin and G Thompson

PRESENT REMOTELY:

Councillor N Trimble

IN ATTENDANCE:

Director of Regeneration and Growth
Head of Planning & Capital Development
Senior Planning Officers (MB, PMcF and GM)
Member Services Officers (CR and CH)

Mr B Martyn (Cleaver Fulton Rankin)

Commencement of Meeting

At the commencement of the meeting, the Chair, Alderman M Gregg, 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. He went on to outline the evacuation procedures in the case of an emergency.

Councillor N Trimble joined the meeting remotely at 10.03 am.

1. **Apologies**

It was agreed to accept apologies for non-attendance at the meeting on behalf of Councillors D Bassett and D J Craig.

2. **Declarations of Interest**

Alderman O Gawith declared an interest in respect of planning application LA05/2024/0823/F, given that his community group looked after the garden beds shown as part of the application. He stated that he would leave the Council Chamber during consideration of this application.

The Chair, Alderman M Gregg, stated that, by virtue of being Members of Council, all Members of the Planning Committee would have an interest in planning application LA05/2024/0753/F. However, the dispensation under paragraph 6.6 of the Code of Conduct applied and Members were permitted to speak and vote on the application.

3. Minutes of Meeting of Planning Committee held on 12 May, 2025

It was proposed by Councillor A Martin, seconded by Alderman J Tinsley and agreed that the minutes of the meeting of Committee held on 12 May, 2025 be confirmed and signed.

At this stage, the Chair, Alderman M Gregg, stated that the Principal Planning Officer, Ms R Heaney, had returned to work but had since taken up a secondment opportunity within the Department for Infrastructure's Planning and Public Transport Group. He thanked her for her service to the Council over the last 10 years and looked forward to welcoming her back in the future.

4. Report from the Head of Planning & Capital Development

4.1 Schedule of Applications

The Chair, Alderman M Gregg, advised that there were 1 major and 4 local applications on the schedule for consideration at the meeting.

4.1.1 Applications to be Determined

Alderman O Gawith left the meeting at this point (10.08 am).

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) LA05/2023/0823/F – Proposed redevelopment of Poole's Supervalu incorporating demolition of the existing retail units and associated outbuildings; proposed adjustment of site entry and exit points; proposed replacement retail unit and two lettable hot food units with associated car parking and landscaping at Poole's Supervalu, 21 Main Street, Moira

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

There were no registered speakers for this application.

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

Debate

During debate:

- Alderman J Tinsley stated that he had had concerns regarding parking, but he had received an explanation. By and large, the economic development here for a local business to invest a lot of money to build brand new premises and two hot food units was welcomed. Alderman Tinsley was in support of the recommendation of the Planning Officer to approve planning permission;

- (i) LA05/2023/0823/F – Proposed redevelopment of Poole’s Supervalu incorporating demolition of the existing retail units and associated outbuildings; proposed adjustment of site entry and exit points; proposed replacement retail unit and two lettable hot food units with associated car parking and landscaping at Poole’s Supervalu, 21 Main Street, Moira (Contd)
- Councillor P Catney stated that he too welcomed the investment but there would be a price to pay. He stated that there were severe traffic problems at the minute coming from the direction of the roundabout and there were already lengthy tailbacks at times. Councillor Catney was not in support of the recommendation of the Planning Officer to approve planning permission;
 - Councillor N Trimble concurred with comments made by Alderman Tinsley and would be supporting the application. What was proposed, although not up to the targets in terms of parking spaces, was better than what was currently in place. Separation of entry and exit would be a huge improvement for road safety; and
 - the Chair, Alderman M Gregg, also concurred with Alderman Tinsley. He had had some concerns in respect of parking but the explanation provided by Officers and the proposal of separating vehicle entry and exit had eased his concerns. He was glad to see that movement of the HGV had been demonstrated and that Officers were content with that. This proposal was an improvement to what was on site currently and Alderman Gregg considered the people of Moira and the wider area would welcome its completion. He was in support of the recommendation of the Planning Officer to approve planning permission.

Vote

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

In favour: Councillor S Burns, Councillor U Mackin, Councillor A Martin, Alderman J Tinsley, Councillor G Thompson, Councillor N Trimble and the Chair, Alderman M Gregg (7)

Against: Councillor P Catney (1)

Abstain: None (0)

Alderman O Gawith returned to the meeting at this point (11.03 am)

- (ii) Planning Application LA05/2024/0753/F – Proposed community hub building at Moira Community Hub, 180 metres northwest of 37 Demesne Grove, Moira

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

There were no registered speakers for this application.

- (ii) Planning Application LA05/2024/0753/F – Proposed community hub building at Moira Community Hub, 180 metres northwest of 37 Demesne Grove, Moira (Contd)

A Member's query was responded to by the Head of Planning & Capital Development.

Debate

During debate:

- Alderman J Tinsley stated that this proposal would be a great addition to the park, which was well-used and had great facilities for community groups, gardening groups, school groups etc. He commended Officers for the application presented to the Committee and welcomed it;
- Councillor G Thompson stated that this proposal presented a great opportunity for the community to use the park in a different way. It was much needed and she commended Officers on the excellent report. Councillor Thompson was in support of the recommendation of the Planning Officer to approve planning permission;
- Alderman O Gawith stated that he was delighted to see this application come to fruition and thanked Officers for getting it to this stage. He looked forward to seeing it in reality; and
- Councillor P Catney welcomed this application.

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.

- (iii) Planning Application LA05/2022/0799/O – Site for replacement dwelling with retention of old dwelling as domestic store on lands 25 metres east of 16 Drumcill Road, Lisburn

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

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

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

Debate

During debate:

- Alderman J Tinsley stated that, given that following the site visit it had been deemed by Officers that a dwelling could be accommodated within the existing curtilage and there was no argument for the replacement to be in the front paddock area, it was difficult to go against the recommendation of the Planning Officer to refuse planning permission; and

(iii) Planning Application LA05/2022/0799/O – Site for replacement dwelling with retention of old dwelling as domestic store on lands 25 metres east of 16 Drumcill Road, Lisburn (Contd)

- Alderman O Gawith stated that, having attended the site visit and given that the application was a dwelling for family, it would seem that the common curtilage would be acceptable. He could see no reason to disagree with the recommendation of the Planning Officer to refuse planning permission.

Vote

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

Adjournment of Meeting

The Chair, Alderman M Gregg, declared the meeting adjourned at this point for a comfort break (11.42 am).

Resumption of Meeting

The meeting was resumed at 11.51 am.

(iv) Planning Application LA05/2024/0186/F – Proposed dwelling within an existing cluster on land 60 metres south of 162 Old Ballynahinch Road, Lisburn

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

The Committee received Alderman J Baird, accompanied by Mr Johnson, in order 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 U Mackin welcomed that the third and fourth reasons for refusal had been withdrawn. He did not agree with the second refusal reason relating to the focal point. He stated that there was no townland or place called Bailliesmills; therefore, Bailliesmills itself was the focal point. It was a cluster of dwellings that, up until about 30-40 years ago, had a post office. In relation to the mill that had been referred to, the mill house was still there although the mill itself, the water wheel, had been removed. It had been the subject of a change of use application a number of years ago and was now a dwelling. Councillor Mackin contended that the location itself was the

- (iv) Planning Application LA05/2024/0186/F – Proposed dwelling within an existing cluster on land 60 metres south of 162 Old Ballynahinch Road, Lisburn (Contd)

focal point because it was a settlement, a community of people. Translink bus route signs often mentioned Bailliesmills. The telephone exchange was still present and was one of the busiest exchanges in this part of the world. The Planning Officer had referred to another application at Bailliesmills Road, but that was a different location altogether. Standing at that location, the Masonic Hall could not be seen; however, standing at the proposed site of this application, the Masonic Hall could be seen, as well as the Church behind. Councillor Mackin stated that policy did not mention distance. It referred to a focal point, defined as a social community building, and the Masonic Hall was such a building and was in regular use. He was content that the application did comply with COU2 and was not in support of the recommendation of the Planning Officer to refuse planning permission; and

- Councillor N Trimble stated that the difficulty with this application was that there was not really a settlement limit. The settlement did exhibit the essential characteristics of a defined settlement. The site looking to be rounded off was bound on every single side. It seemed a bit of a wasted space at the moment and there was currently no great agricultural use. Councillor Trimble stated that the only refusal reason was predicated on the lack of a focal point and he was undecided at the moment. Policy stated that the application had to be associated with a focal point, not situated right beside it. Councillor Trimble was not familiar with the area and was unsure how linked the Masonic Hall was to the dwellings. If this application was not approved and the site remained undeveloped, it remained of no, or very limited, use in any way. Councillor Trimble was curious to hear the views of other Members. He did not deem there to be any negative consequences of approving this application.

At this point, Councillor A Martin proposed that the application be deferred for a site visit to take place in order to determine the location of the Masonic Hall within the cluster, as well as the telephone exchange and former post office. This was seconded by Alderman O Gawith. A further discussion took place, during which the Head of Planning & Capital Development addressed a number of Members' queries. On a vote being taken, the proposal to defer the application for a site visit was declared 'lost', the voting being 4 in favour, 4 against, 1 abstention and the Chair subsequently using his casting vote.

The debate continued at this stage:

- Alderman J Tinsley stated that, given that the former post office and mill were now dwelling houses and were 400 metres away, the cluster argument weakened. He understood what Councillor Mackin had said that the area was a cluster but, purely on policy, a focal point was a social community building. Even the telephone exchange was a business, not a community building. Alderman Tinsley was in support of the recommendation of the Planning Officer to refuse planning permission;

(iv) Planning Application LA05/2024/0186/F – Proposed dwelling within an existing cluster on land 60 metres south of 162 Old Ballynahinch Road, Lisburn (Contd)

- Alderman O Gawith stated that, having read the report, he had been in support of the recommendation of the Planning Officer to refuse planning permission; however, having listened to comments by Councillor Mackin, he was not clear enough to know whether or not the Officer's recommendation was the correct one. Alderman Gawith would be abstaining from the vote; and
- the Chair, Alderman M Gregg, concurred with comments by Alderman Tinsley. The historical buildings referred to by Councillor Mackin were now houses in the cluster. Issues raised by Councillors Mackin and Trimble probably could be addressed in the next stage of the Local Development Plan. As it stood now, this was a development in the countryside, there was no focal point in Alderman Gregg's opinion that could be looked at to fulfil COU2. The Masonic Hall was much too far away and he doubted it could be seen from this site. Given the context of the PAC decision outlined by the Planning Officer, Alderman Gregg deemed the Masonic Hall could not be cited as a focal point. He welcomed the fact that NH2 and NH5 had been withdrawn from the refusal reasons but he did not consider the application to meet with COU2 and was in support of the recommendation of the Planning Officer to refuse planning permission.

Vote

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

In favour: Councillor S Burns, Councillor A Martin, Alderman J Tinsley, Councillor G Thompson and the Chair, Alderman M Gregg (5)

Against: Councillor P Catney, Councillor U Mackin and Councillor N Trimble (3)

Abstain: Alderman O Gawith (1)

Adjournment of Meeting

The Chair, Alderman M Gregg, declared the meeting adjourned at this point for lunch (12.47 pm).

Resumption of Meeting

The meeting was resumed at 1.33 pm.

- (v) Planning Application LA05/2023/0012/F – New one and a half storey infill dwelling with detached double garage on land 60 metres south of 20 Magheradartin Road and 75 metres northwest of 22 Magheradartin Road, Royal Hillsborough

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

The Committee received Ms E Heath to speak in support of the application and a number of Members' queries were responded to.

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

Debate

During debate:

- Councillor N Trimble stated that, unfortunately this was not the only application that, under the previous policy, may have been approved but under the currently policy it not quite fit. From the drawings provided in the Officer's report and the document provided by Ms Heath, there were a lot of ancillary buildings at no.20 that had been discounted. Councillor Trimble considered that to be a little bit heavy-handed by Planning Officers. The previous policy was that the gap could accommodate up to two; the current policy required that it accommodate two. Councillor Trimble did not consider that the gap could accommodate two dwellings that respected the character of development in the surrounding area. In his view, current policy did not permit this application; and
- the Chair, Alderman M Gregg, concurred with Councillor Trimble. Whilst the Committee may empathise with the applicant, it was bound by policy. Alderman Gregg was in support of the recommendation of the Planning Officer to refuse planning permission.

Vote

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

4.2 Statutory Performance Indicators – April 2025

Members were provided with information in relation to statutory performance indicators for April 2025. It was proposed by Alderman J Tinsley, seconded by Councillor P Catney and agreed that this information be noted.

4.3 Appeal Decision – LA05/2021/1150/F

It was proposed by Councillor A Martin, seconded by Councillor P Catney and agreed that the report and decision of the Planning Appeals Commission in respect of the above appeal be noted.

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

It was proposed by Councillor P Catney, seconded by Councillor A Martin and agreed to note from the report, information regarding notification by telecommunication operators of intention to utilise Permitted Development Rights at a number of locations in the Council area.

4.5 Correspondence from DfI Climate, Planning and Public Transport Group regarding Transforming Planning – Appointed Persons, Independent Inspectors Project

It was proposed by Alderman J Tinsley, seconded by Alderman O Gawith and agreed that the contents of the above correspondence be noted.

5. Any Other Business

5.1 Review of Planning Policies
Councillor U Mackin

Councillor U Mackin referred to planning policies, in particular COU2 and COU8, which he stated were pretty tight in terms of interpretation. He asked when the opportunity would arise for reviewing policies. The Head of Planning & Capital Development advised that the Local Policies Plan was the next stage in a two part process. Officers were currently gathering evidence for that and the Council was still in accordance with its timetable, with the earliest draft being available in mid 2026 and going out to public consultation. The first that the Local Policies Plan would be examined would be 2028, unless more resources were provided to allow it to be examined more quickly. The Adopted Plan Strategy could be changed at any time but that would require going back through the process of gathering evidence, the consultation process and further independent examination.

The Head of Planning & Capital Development advised that one element of the Plan Strategy that had not been found to be sound at independent, ie. Sprucefield and outlined steps currently being taken to address that.

The normal timeframe for review of policy was after 5 years but Officers did have an obligation to monitor how policies were operating. There was some evidence in respect of that and the Head of Planning & Capital Development stated he would bring a report to the Committee to inform Members on how policy was operating for infill development or for dwellings in clusters, in terms of the numbers of applications received and the number approved and refused.

The Head of Planning & Capital Development stated that now may not be the time to review policy. He referred to the fact that COU8 had been tested through the courts and the outcome was awaited.

The Head of Planning & Capital Development noted comments by Councillor N Trimble and the Chair, Alderman M Gregg, that it would be beneficial to engage with Members through a number of workshops in relation to any policies they considered required further work.

5.2 Application for New Cemetery at Dundrod
 Alderman J Tinsley

In response to a query by Alderman J Tinsley regarding a fresh application that had been submitted for a new cemetery at Dundrod, the Head of Planning & Capital Development stated that information, particularly of an environmental nature, should not be of a vintage of 8-10 years old and the report should relate to the development that was proposed now, not something that had gone before. The Planning Officer who was allocated this application would look at this in more detail.

5.3 Thanks to Chair
 Alderman O Gawith

Alderman O Gawith referred to the fact that this was the last meeting of the Planning Committee before the Annual Meeting when a new Chair would be appointed. He thanked Alderman Gregg for this chairmanship of the Committee for the past 2 years. Councillor N Trimble concurred with these sentiments.

5.4 Thanks from Chair
 Alderman M Gregg

This being his last meeting as Chair, Alderman M Gregg, thanked Members of the Committee for their time over the past 2 years and for the quality of their questions to Officers. He thanked Planning Officers for the preparation and delivery of application reports to the Committee. He also thanked the Director, Head of Planning & Capital Development, Legal Advisor, Member Services Officers and the Vice-Chair, Councillor S Burns.

On behalf of Officers, the Head of Planning & Capital Development thanked the Chair, Alderman M Gregg, and the Vice-Chair, Councillor S Burns, for their commitment and contribution to the Committee. He also thanked other Members, noting that the Planning Committee was a challenging one.

5.5 Date of Next Meeting

The Chair, Alderman M Gregg, advised that the next meeting of the Committee would be held on Monday, 7 July, 2025.

Conclusion of the Meeting

At the conclusion of the meeting, the Chair, Alderman M Gregg, thanked those present for their attendance.

There being no further business, the meeting was terminated at 2.37 pm.

Chair/Mayor