

LISBURN & CASTLEREAGH CITY COUNCIL

Minutes of Planning Committee Meeting held in the Council Chamber and in Remote Locations on Monday, 3 March, 2025 at 10.03 am

PRESENT IN CHAMBER:

Councillor S Burns (Vice-Chairperson)

Aldermen O Gawith and J Tinsley

Councillors D Bassett, P Catney, D J Craig, U Mackin, A Martin and G Thompson

IN ATTENDANCE:

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

Mr S Masterson (Cleaver Fulton Rankin)

Commencement of Meeting

At the commencement of the meeting, the Vice-Chairperson, Councillor S Burns, welcomed those present to the Planning Committee. She pointed out that, unless the item on the agenda was considered under confidential business, this meeting would be audio recorded. The Head of Service for Planning and Capital Development outlined the evacuation procedures in the case of an emergency.

1. **Apologies**

It was agreed to accept apologies for non-attendance at the meeting on behalf of the Chairperson, Alderman M Gregg and Councillor N Trimble. It was noted that Alderman J Tinsley would be arriving late to the meeting.

2. **Declarations of Interest**

The following declarations of interest were made:

- Councillor U Mackin in respect of planning application LA05/2021/0360/F, as he was contacted about this application but did not offer any opinion; and
- Councillor D J Craig in respect of planning application LA05/2024/0780/F, as he spoke in support of this application in the Assembly as an MLA.

3. **Minutes of Meeting of Planning Committee held on 3 February, 2025**

It was proposed by Councillor P Catney, seconded by Councillor A Martin and agreed that the minutes of the meeting of Committee held on 3 February, 2025 be confirmed and signed.

4. Report from the Head of Planning & Capital Development

4.1 Schedule of Applications

The Vice-Chairperson, Councillor S Burns, advised that there were 2 major applications and 3 local applications on the schedule for consideration at the meeting, with 1 application having been withdrawn from the schedule.

4.1.1 Applications to be Determined

The Legal Advisor, Mr S Masterson, 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) LA05/2024/0780/F - Proposal to vary Condition 8 of planning approval S/2014/0884/F to allow the Construction Management and Environmental Plan to be provided in phases on land east of Knockmore Road, south of 68-80 Addison Park and 8-10 Knockmore Road and North of Flush Park, Lisburn

Having declared an interest in the above application, Councillor D J Craig left the Council Chamber immediately before its presentation (10.10 am).

The Senior Planning Officer (PMcF) presented the above application as outlined within the circulated report. Members noted an error in the report within the planning history, the previous application being approved on 22 July 2020, not 2022 as stated in the report.

The Committee received Ms R O'Neill accompanied by Ms E Donaldson and Mr C Jordan 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 stated that he lived in the area along the railway line, had personally been contacted by Translink on a number of occasions, and had no doubt of their commitment to keep all those involved updated on progress. He advised that he was in support of the recommendation to approve this application;
- Alderman O Gawith stated that he was reassured by the answers provided by Officers to his concerns and would be supporting the recommendation of the Planning Officer to approve 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.

Adjournment of Meeting

The Vice-Chairperson, Councillor S Burns, declared the meeting adjourned at this point for a comfort break (11 am).

Resumption of Meeting

The meeting was resumed at 11.11 am. Councillor D J Craig returned to the meeting on resumption of business.

- (ii) LA05/2024/0734/F – Proposal to vary condition 12 of planning approval LA05/2022/0830/F, from no more than 47 dwellings shall be built and occupied until the commercial/industrial units indicated as W1-W6 on the proposed site plan bearing council date stamp 16 March 2022

Alderman J Tinsley arrived at the meeting during consideration of this application (11.22 am).

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

The Committee received Ms S Murphy accompanied by Mr J Anderson to speak in support of the application and a number of Members' queries were addressed.

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

Responding to questions in respect of the role of the Housing Association in the project and information supplied separately by the applicant in respect of the cost of the proposed development, the Head of Planning and Capital Development advised Members' that information in relation to viability was confidential in nature and should the Members require further advice in respect of that information, then it would need to be dealt with as confidential business.

"In Committee"

It was proposed by Councillor A Martin, seconded by Alderman O Gawith, and agreed to go 'into committee' to consider this matter. Those members of the public in attendance left the meeting (11.58 am).

The Head of Service for Planning and Capital Development provided clarification to Members, in relation to commercial in confidence information, which had been provided by the applicant in support of the application.

Resumption of Normal Business

It was proposed by Councillor P Catney, seconded by Councillor A Martin, and agreed to come out of committee and normal business was resumed (12.13 pm).

Additional Members' queries were responded to by Planning Officers.

- (ii) LA05/2024/0734/F – Proposal to vary condition 12 of planning approval LA05/2022/0830/F, from no more than 47 dwellings shall be built and occupied until the commercial/industrial units indicated as W1-W6 on the proposed site plan bearing council date stamp 16 March 2022 (Cont'd)

Debate

During Debate:

- Councillor P Catney stated that the previous application in 2022 had been a futuristic new way of building, with reduced car parking due to the nearby railway halt offering sustainable travel, and the inclusion of 6 commercial units. He was concerned if the commercial units were cut back from 6 to 2 at this stage, there would be no 100% guarantee that the remaining 4 units would be built in future, and stated that he was not sure he could support the recommendation to approve the planning application;
- Alderman O Gawith acknowledged that Councillor P Catney made a valid point, only having 2 commercial units built did not give the security that the remaining 4 would be built. Whilst there was a commitment that they would be built if they were required, it was still concerning. He was equally concerned that the whole project may not progress if the application was not approved. He would have been happier if a better commitment had been provided by the developer for all 6 units to be built. He advised that he was undecided at this point, and was interested to hear the views of Councillor Uel Mackin, as he had also raised the issue earlier during questions to Officers;
- Councillor D J Craig advised that he had listened with interest to the debate, and yet again as a planning committee they found themselves debating issues which were outside of their planning remit. He stated that there was a choice to be made, the committee had been provided with a commercial basis on which the site could be delivered, with 63 built and sold, and economic sense for 2 units to be built currently, or refuse the application and ultimately the developer would walk away, and nothing would be delivered. Councillor D J Craig expressed sympathy for developer, given the nature of the demolition and the complexities of the contamination of the site alongside inflation costs. He confirmed that he would be supporting the recommendation to approve the application because he wanted to see the site delivered. He confirmed that whilst he did not have 100% reassurance that the remaining 4 commercial units would be built, the fact that the foundations for the 4 remaining units were complete, and the ancillary equipment for the units would be put in place before the development completed was reassuring, and ultimately, if further changes to the site were sought, it would be the planning committee that would consider whether to grant permission;
- Councillor U Mackin concurred with the sentiments of the comments made by both Cllr Catney and Ald Gawith, as he also had concerns that no firm guarantee had been provided that all 6 units would be built in future, which could result in a loss of employment area.

(ii) LA05/2024/0734/F – Proposal to vary condition 12 of planning approval LA05/2022/0830/F, from no more than 47 dwellings shall be built and occupied until the commercial/industrial units indicated as W1-W6 on the proposed site plan bearing council date stamp 16 March 2022 (Cont'd)

- However, he was also aware that there was a demand for commercial property in the area, which gave him a degree of comfort that the 6 units could be utilised the way they were originally intended. Councillor U Mackin confirmed that on balance he would be voting in favour of the Officers recommendation to approve planning permission;
- Councillor P Catney confirmed that he would be voting against the recommendation to approve planning permission as he felt the developer should proceed as originally agreed in the 2022 planning permission;
- Alderman O Gawith acknowledged the commercial reality of the situation but hoped that the 6 commercial units would still be built. He concurred with the sentiments of Councillor U Mackin, advising his finely balanced decision to vote in favour of the Officers recommendation was taken to ensure the best benefit for social housing was achieved.

Vote

On a vote being taken, it was agreed that planning permission for this application be approved, the voting being as follows:

In favour: Councillor D Bassett, Councillor S Burns, Councillor D J Craig, Alderman O Gawith, Councillor U Mackin, Councillor A Martin, Councillor G Thompson (7)

Against: Councillor P Catney (1)

Not having been present for the entire consideration of this application, Alderman J Tinsley did not participate in the vote.

Adjournment of Meeting

The Vice-Chairperson, Councillor S Burns, declared the meeting adjourned at this point for Lunch (12.39 pm).

Resumption of Meeting

The meeting was resumed at 1.19 pm.

Councillor P Catney did not return to the meeting on the resumption of business.

The Vice-Chairperson, Councillor S Burns, informing the Committee of a slight change to the schedule, advised that application LA05/2021/0360/F would be considered at this point in the meeting.

- (iii) LA05/2021/0360/F – Proposed infill dwelling and garage on lands between 11 and 13 Crossan Road, Lisburn

The Senior Planning Officer (PMcF) 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. Members' queries were responded to by Planning Officers.

Alderman O Gawith having stated that he would benefit from viewing the location of the development site, proposed that this application be deferred for a site visit. This was seconded by Councillor U Mackin and unanimously agreed by the Committee.

- (iv) LA05/2022/0562/F – Proposed residential development comprising of 14 apartments (1 one bed and 13 two bed) with private and communal amenity space, bin and bicycle storage, landscaping, car parking and all associated site works on lands at 933 Upper Newtownards Road, Dundonald

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

No-one was registered to speak on this application. The agent Mr D Broderick was in remote attendance and a number of Members' queries were addressed.

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

Debate

There were no comments made at the debate stage.

Vote

On a vote being taken, it was agreed that planning permission for this application be approved, the voting being as follows:

In favour: Councillor D Bassett, Councillor S Burns, Councillor D J Craig, Alderman O Gawith, Councillor A Martin, Alderman J Tinsley, Councillor G Thompson (7)

Against: Councillor U Mackin (1)

- (v) LA05/2020/0991/O – Site for a replacement dwelling, garage and associated siteworks on land 120 metres west of St Patricks RC Church, 23a Barnfield Road, Lisburn

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

- (v) LA05/2020/0991/O – Site for a replacement dwelling, garage and associated siteworks on land 120 metres west of St Patricks RC Church, 23a Barnfield Road, Lisburn (Cont'd)

The Committee received Mr N Coffee to speak in support of the application and Members queries were addressed.

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

Councillor A Martin, having stated that he would benefit from viewing the location of the development site, proposed that this application be deferred for a site visit. This was seconded by Alderman O Gawith and agreed on a vote being taken, the voting being 7 in favour and 1 against.

Adjournment of Meeting

The Vice-Chairperson, Councillor S Burns, declared the meeting adjourned at this point for a comfort break (2.46 pm).

Resumption of Meeting

The meeting was resumed at 2.59 pm. Councillor Bassett did not return to the meeting on the resumption of business.

4.2 Appeal Decision – LA05/2021/0168/F

It was proposed by Councillor G Thompson, seconded by Alderman O Gawith and agreed that the report and decision of the Planning Appeals Commission in respect of the above appeal be noted.

4.3 Appeal Decision – LA05/2021/1305/F

It was proposed by Councillor U Mackin, seconded by Councillor G Thompson and agreed that the report and decision of the Planning Appeals Commission in respect of the above appeals be noted.

4.4 Statutory Performance Indicators – January 2025

Members were provided with information in relation to statutory performance indicators for January 2025. It was proposed by Councillor A Martin, seconded by Alderman O Gawith, and agreed that this information be noted.

4.5 Proposed Abandonment at Comber Road, Dundonald

It was proposed by Alderman J Tinsley, seconded by Councillor A Martin and agreed to note from the report, information regarding notification by the Department for Infrastructure (DfI), on the proposed abandonment and stopping up at Comber Road, Dundonald.

4.6 Letter from Department of Communities HED

It was proposed by Councillor D J Craig, seconded by Councillor G Thompson and agreed to note from the report, the update provided by the Heritage Buildings Designation Branch, on the importance of keeping the process of adding buildings to the list of buildings of special architectural or historic interest confidential.

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

It was proposed by Councillor D J Craig, seconded by Alderman O Gawith, 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.

5. Any Other Business

5.1 Court of Appeal Decision

The Head of Service for Planning and Capital Development advised the Committee that legal advice was available to Members in relation to the above matter.

"In Committee"

It was proposed by Councillor D J Craig, seconded by Councillor A Martin, and agreed to go 'into committee' to consider this matter (3.08 pm).

Legal advice was provided by the Legal Advisor in respect of the above matter.

Resumption of Normal Business

It was proposed by Councillor A Martin, seconded by Alderman O Gawith, and agreed to come out of committee and normal business was resumed (3.27 pm).

Conclusion of the Meeting

At the conclusion of the meeting, the Vice-Chairperson, Councillor S Burns, thanked those present for their attendance.

There being no further business, the meeting was ended at 3.27 pm.

Chair/Mayor