

Planning Committee

Tuesday, 11th November, 2025

HYBRID MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE

- Members present: Councillor Murphy (Chairperson);
Aldermen Lawlor, McCullough and Rodgers;
Councillors Abernethy, Anglin, Bell, Brennan,
T. Brooks, Carson, Doran, D. Douglas,
S. Douglas, Garrett, Groogan, Hanvey,
Magee, McCabe, McCann and Whyte.
- In attendance: Ms. K. Bentley, Director of Planning and Building Control;
Ms. N. Largey, City Solicitor;
Mr. K. McDonnell, Solicitor (Regulatory and Planning);
Mr. E. Baker, Planning Manager (Development
Management);
Ms. C. Reville, Principal Planning Officer;
Ms. L. Walshe, Principal Planning Officer; and
Ms. C. Donnelly, Committee Services Officer.

Apologies

No apologies were reported.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 14th October 2025 were taken as read and signed as correct. It was reported that those minutes had been adopted by the Council at its meeting on 3rd November, 2025.

Declarations of Interest

Councillor Brennan declared an interest in relation to item 8a- LA04/2024/0626/F, in that she had prior engagement with the developers, and she left the meeting while the item was being considered.

Councillor Whyte declared an interest in relation to item 8a – LA04/2024/0626/F, on the basis that he had previously worked with the Housing Association.

Councillors D. Douglas and S. Douglas declared an interest in relation to item 9a - LA04/2025/0556/F and LA04/2025/0557/DCA, in that a family member was an employee of the applicant and they left the meeting whilst the application was being considered.

Schedule of Meetings for 2026

The Committee noted and agreed the schedule of meetings for 2026.

Correspondence – DfI: Hill Street Pedestrianisation

The Committee noted the correspondence received.

Committee Site Visits

Pre-emptive Site Visit

The Committee agreed to undertake a site visit to the following application site:

- LA04/2025/0574/F - Erection of eight storey building comprising seven floors of grade A office accommodation, ground floor retail / business units together with car parking (15 no. spaces), cycle parking and plant areas: and public realm improvements including dedicated drop-off area to front of building - Surface level car park at lands to east of Lanyon Place Station, Mays Meadow.

Planning Appeals Notified

The Committee noted the appeals decisions.

Planning Decisions Issued

The Committee noted the planning decisions issued in October, 2025.

Live Applications for Major Development

The Committee noted the list of live applications for major development.

Committee Decisions that have yet to issue

The Committee noted the list of Committee decisions which had not yet been issued.

Miscellaneous Reports

Consultation on Planning Fees

The Planning Manager explained that the Department for Infrastructure (DfI) was consulting on its review of planning fees, namely, the proposed introduction of fees for non-material changes and discharges of condition applications.

He reported that DfI was also seeking views on whether any other application types that were currently not charged for, should attract a fee.

He outlined the current and proposed planning fees and asked the Committee for comment ahead of consideration by the Strategic Planning and Resources Committee.

Following discussion, the Committee noted the proposed consultation response and agreed to recommend to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee that consideration be given to including a proposal for increasing fees for retrospective

planning applications to deter development or works being carried out without the necessary permissions in place.

**Local Applications subject to
objections from NI Water**

The Committee agreed to delegate to the Director of Planning and Building Control those Local planning applications to which NI Water had objected.

Planning Applications previously considered

**LA04/2024/0626/F - Erection of 104no. social
rented residential units (comprising a mix
of General Social Housing and Category 1
over 55's accommodation) across two
detached blocks [ranging between 3 and 5 storeys],
landscaping, communal and private amenity
space, ancillary cycle and car parking provision,
and other associated site works - 1 Havelock
House Havelock Place**

Following a suggestion by the Planning Manager, the Committee agreed that it did not require a summary of the application, having undertaken a detailed presentation at the Pre-Determination Hearing prior to commencement of the meeting.

The Planning Manager stated that it was recommended that planning permission be granted, subject to conditions and a Section 76 planning agreement.

The Chairperson offered those speakers who had attended the Pre-Determination Hearing as part of a deputation, an opportunity to add to those representations previously made.

Ms. F. McGrath, Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE), speaking as an objecting statutory consultant, stated that NIHE support for other mono-tenure housing schemes had been because of ongoing work with the housing associations on those schemes for many years prior to the adoption of the Local Development Plan, however, going forward, any schemes of a similar scale, the NIHE would be of the view that it would need to be a mixed tenure scheme.

Mr. T. Stokes, TSA Planning, speaking as an agent acting on behalf of the applicant, stated that he was content with the information provided and was happy to answer any questions from Members of the Committee.

In response to a question from a Member regarding the possibility of the applicant amending the application to a mixed tenure scheme, following the advice of NIHE, he stated that the application before Committee was for a scheme that would provide 100% social housing which had been assessed by planning officers on that basis.

Mr. P. McDonald, Donegall Pass Community Forum, speaking on behalf of objecting local residents, stated that south Belfast had the highest percentage of rental accommodation in Northern Ireland, inclusive of private rentals and social housing, and the need for affordable housing was not being addressed.

The Planning Manager, in response to a request from a Member, clarified that Policy HOU5 and the Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) stated that there might be issues of concern with regard to mono-tenure schemes which did not generally represent sustainable and balanced communities, and it advised that, with regard to larger schemes of 12 units or more, the Council should have regard to a number of factors when considering whether or not a mono-tenure was appropriate. He added that the SPG did not state that larger schemes could not be mono-tenure and would be assessed on a case by case basis.

Proposal 1

Moved by Councillor Magee,
Seconded by Councillor McCann,

“That the Committee approves the officers’ recommendation to grant planning permission, subject to conditions and a Section 76 planning agreement to require all 104 apartments to be delivered as social housing and delegates authority to the Director of Planning and Building Control to finalise the wording of the conditions and Section 76 planning agreement, and to deal with any other issues that might arise, provided that they are not substantive.”

On a vote, nine Members voted for the proposal and ten against and it was declared lost.

The Chairperson advised the Committee that, as the proposal to approve the application had fallen, dissenting Members were required to propose to refuse the application and state the grounds on which the refusal would be based.

Proposal 2

Moved by Councillor T. Brooks,
Seconded by Councillor Hanvey,

“That the Committee refuses to grant planning permission on the basis that the scheme was a mono-tenure scheme consisting of 100% social housing and contrary to the Supplementary Planning Guidance and NIHE advice.”

Amendment

Moved by Alderman McCullough,
Seconded by Councillor Doran,

“That the Committee refuse the application on the basis of a lack of community engagement, insufficient amenity and parking, and due to the size, scale and overshadowing of the proposal.”

On a vote, six Members voted for the amendment and thirteen against and it was declared lost.

The proposal, standing in the name of Councillor T. Brooks was put to the Committee and on a vote, four Members voted for the proposal and fifteen against and it was declared lost.

Proposal 3

Moved by Councillor McCann,
Seconded by Councillor Magee,

“That the Committee approves the officers’ recommendation to grant planning permission, subject to conditions and a Section 76 planning agreement to require all 104 apartments to be delivered as social housing and delegates authority to the Director of Planning and Building Control to finalise the wording of the conditions and Section 76 planning agreement, and to deal with any other issues that might arise, provided that they are not substantive.”

On a vote, twelve Members voted for the proposal and seven against and it was declared carried.

LA04/2024/1576/F - Demolition of existing buildings at no. 733 & no. 735 Antrim Road to facilitate proposed residential social housing development comprising of 2no. buildings containing 34no. units with associated in-curtilage parking and landscaping (Amended description) - 733-735 Antrim Road

The Planning Manager explained that the application had been approved by the Committee at its meeting in October, subject to conditions and that Condition 24 required the submission and approval of details of wastewater disposal prior to commencement of development.

He reported that NI Water had indicated, prior to the Committee’s decision, that it believed that a solution could be found to address its objection relating to insufficient network capacity in order to accommodate the proposal, however, the applicant’s subsequent Wastewater Impact Assessment had been rejected by NI Water. The applicant was therefore unable to accept Condition 24 and the application was before the Committee for reconsideration.

He summarised the application for the Committee and provided visuals of the site location plan and proposed site layout and elevations.

He stated that NI Water, prior to the meeting of the Committee in October, had advised that, subject to further engagement with the developer, there was a solution to its objection through stormwater off-setting, as the storm water currently discharged into the combined sewer overflow network and the developer had proposed to separate foul and surface water drainage.

He explained that the applicant’s Wastewater Impact Assessment, submitted following the decision of the Committee at its meeting in October, had been rejected by

NI Water due to the high polluting nature of assets with the potential to pollute the environment and that there were no tactical solutions available. NI Water further advised that a more in-depth review of the network was required which the applicant believed could take several months to complete.

He reported that NI Water had been asked to provide its updated position following the submission of the Wastewater Impact Assessment but had not yet responded.

The Planning Manager outlined the following points in the applicant's case for the removal of Condition 24:

- The previous advice given to the Council by NI Water which indicated a solution could be found;
- The planning history of the site;
- The proposal was for 100% social housing scheme in north Belfast where there was a significant unmet social housing need;
- The technical report from the applicant's engineer demonstrating the stormwater off-setting proposal; and
- Updated technical drainage drawing from the applicant.

He reported that a further objection had been received from a resident to the rear of the application site which referred to the applicant's drainage proposals having been rejected by NI Water and raised concern that insufficient drainage could lead to consequential flooding of their property, and that previous objections from local residents had not been addressed

He stated that it was recommended that planning permission be granted, subject to conditions and a Section 76 planning agreement.

The Chairperson advised the Committee that the agents, acting on behalf of the applicant, were in attendance and available to answer any questions that Members might have.

In response to a question from a Member in relation to the advice received from Shared Environmental Services, Mr. B. Owens, S4S Group, explained that the applicant had worked with NI Water on a wastewater solution to produce the current proposal with Radius Housing with the intention of withdrawing the renewal of an existing extant permission to which NI Water had not objected and that the current application was in line with what was presented by a senior NI Water official following the meeting of the Planning Committee in October.

Following a question from a Member, the Planning Manager advised the Committee that if it was minded to remove Condition 24, the Committee would be required to replace it with an alternative condition to facilitate appropriate stormwater offsetting, as proposed by the applicant.

Proposal

Moved by Councillor Magee,
Seconded by Councillor Brennan,

“That the Committee grants planning permission with the removal of Condition 24, subject to conditions and a Section 76 planning agreement and delegates authority to the Director of Planning and Building Control to finalise the wording of the conditions and Section 76 planning agreement, to explore, in consultation with the applicant, a condition that would provide for a sufficient drainage solution, and to deal with any other matters that might arise, provided that they are not substantive.”

Amendment

Moved by Councillor Groogan,
Seconded by Councillor T. Brooks,

“That the Committee grants planning permission with, subject to conditions, including Condition 24, and a Section 76 planning agreement and delegates authority to the Director of Planning and Building Control to finalise the wording of the conditions and Section 76 planning agreement and to deal with any other matters that might arise, provided that they are not substantive.”

On a vote, three Members voted for the amendment and fourteen against and it was declared lost.

Accordingly, the proposal standing in the name of Councillor Magee was put to the Committee and passed.

New Planning Applications

**LA04/2025/0556/F & LA04/2025/0557/DCA –
Proposed change of use from restaurant,
public house, 2 no retail units and office use
to public house, restaurant, hotel and 1.no
retail unit with an additional 2no.storeys
associated with the hotel use, and all external
façade alterations. Demolition to include; ground
floor facades remodelling, removal of window
detailing to upper floors, removal and replacement
of windows and doors, creation of new door and
window openings, removal of roof to rear return
and internal wall and roof demolition to accommodate
reconfiguration of buildings and associated
development for proposed change of use –
Lands at no's 10-22 Ann Street Belfast (including
8-10 Crown Entry and 12 Crown Entry)**

The Principal Planning Officer provided the Committee with an overview of the application and highlighted the following key points for consideration:

- Principle of proposal;
- Design and placemaking;
- Built heritage;
- Impact on amenity;
- Access and transport;
- Climate change;
- Environmental protection;
- Waste-water infrastructure;
- Waste storage; and
- Natural heritage.

She stated that the proposed extension was considered to be subservient to the existing building and was sympathetic to both the character of the Conservation Area and the setting of the surrounding listed buildings. She added that it was considered that the character and appearance of the Conservation Area would be enhanced.

She reported that HED, NIEA and Environmental Health had responded advising no objections, subject to conditions and that Internal Conservation Advice had raised concerns, which had been addressed within the report. She added that NI Water had recommended refusal due to waste-water network capacity issues which would be addressed by way of condition.

She stated that, having regard to the Development Plan and all relevant material considerations, it was recommended that planning permission be granted, subject to conditions.

The Committee granted planning permission and Conservation Area Consent, subject to conditions, and delegated authority to the Director of Planning and Building Control to finalise the wording of the conditions, to deal with the outstanding consultation responses from SES, DFI Roads and DFI Rivers, and to deal with any other issues that might arise, provided that they were not substantive.

Chairperson