



Subject:	Planning Committee review of previously determined applications
Date:	18 th June 2024
Reporting Officer(s):	Kate Bentley, Director of Planning and Building Control
Contact Officer(s):	Ed Baker, Planning Manager (Development Management)

Restricted Reports	
Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Call-in	
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

1.0	Purpose of Report or Summary of Main Issues
1.1	It is a recommendation of both the NI Audit Office and Public Accounts Committee reports of the NI planning system that planning committees regularly review a sample of their previously determined applications.
1.2	The Committee is asked to agree to undertake an annual review of a sample of implemented schemes that it has granted planning permission.
2.0	Recommendation
2.1	It is recommended that the Committee agrees to undertake an annual review of a sample of implemented schemes that it has granted planning permission. This would involve visiting selected sites and reflecting on what was good about the scheme and what could have made it better.
3.0	Main Report
	<u>Background</u>
3.1	In February 2022, the NI Audit Office (“NIAO”) reported on its review of the NI planning system. The NIAO found that there was significant scope for improvement of the way in which the planning system operates and made a series of recommendations. This included Committees undertaking an annual monitoring exercise to review the impact of planning decisions that they have made in the past.

3.2	The NIAO report was shortly followed by the Public Accounts Committee's review of the NI planning system in March 2022. The Public Accounts Committee similarly recommended that Councils regularly review past decisions to understand their real-world outcomes, impacts on communities and the quality of completed development.
3.3	A copy of the relevant recommendations of the NIAO and Public Accounts Committee reports, together with links to the reports in full, can be found at Appendix 1 .
3.6	The NIAO and Public Accounts Committee reports have previously been reported to the Committee, notably at its 14 April 2022 meeting and it has subsequently received periodic updates on the Departmental-led regional planning improvement programme.
	<u>Assessment</u>
3.7	Officers consider that the recommendations of both reports relating to the Committee reviewing implemented schemes that it has granted permission has great merit. It will support learning and development, and potentially improve future decision making.
3.8	Planning staff have similarly undertaken visits to implemented schemes as part of their continuous professional development.
3.9	It is suggested that the Committee visits a small selection of sites across the City that it has approved, covering a range of different development types such as residential, affordable housing, purpose built managed student accommodation and commercial. A specific list of sites is not suggested at this stage due to the need coordinate and make logistical arrangements with applicants, developers, occupants and operators.
3.10	Due to other pre-existing commitments, it is recommended that the review of schemes is relatively "light-touch" at this stage, primarily based around a visit to the selected sites and a basic assessment of the quality of decision making and outcomes.
3.11	The Committee is asked to agree the above approach.
4.0	Financial & Resource Implications
4.1	The proposed review of implemented schemes would have a modest impact on time and resources. It is considered extremely good value for money in terms of supporting learning and development, and potential to improve future decision making.
5.0	Equality or Good Relations Implications / Rural Needs Assessment
5.1	There are no equality or good relations / rural needs implications associated with this report.
6.0	Appendices – Documents Attached
	Appendix 1 – NIAO and Planning Appeals Commission Recommendations relating to planning committees reviewing schemes that they have previously approved