



<b>Title of Report:</b>	<b>Planning Committee Report – LA01/2024/1183/O</b>
<b>Committee Report Submitted To:</b>	<b>Planning Committee</b>
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	<b>24<sup>th</sup> June 2026</b>
<b>For Decision or For Information</b>	<b>For Decision – Referred Item – Cllr McAuley</b>
<b>To be discussed In Committee YES/NO</b>	<b>NO</b>

<b>Linkage to Council Plan (2026-31)</b>	
Strategic Theme	Governance, Quality & Continuous Improvement
Outcome	Governance arrangements that ensure compliance, transparency and effective decision-making
Lead Officer	Development Management Manager

<b>Budgetary Considerations</b>	
Cost of Proposal	---
Included in Current Year Estimates	N/A
Capital/Revenue	N/A
Code	N/A
Staffing Costs	N/A

<b>Legal Considerations</b>	
Input of Legal Services Required	NO
Legal Opinion Obtained	NO

<b>Screening Requirements</b>	Required for new or revised Policies, Plans, Strategies or Service Delivery Proposals.
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Section 75 Screening	Screening Completed:	N/A	Date:
	EQIA Required and Completed:	N/A	Date:
Rural Needs Assessment (RNA)	Screening Completed	N/A	Date:
	RNA Required and Completed:	N/A	Date:
Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA)	Screening Completed:	N/A	Date:
	DPIA Required and Completed:	N/A	Date:

**No: LA01/2024/1183/O      Ward: Loughguile and Stranocum**

**App Type: Outline Planning**

**Address: 150m NE of 78 Gracehill Road, Stranocum, Ballymoney**

**Proposal: Proposed Site for Dwelling and Domestic Garage as Policy CTY10 (Dwelling on a Farm)**

**Con Area: n/a      Valid Date: 29.10.2024**

**Listed Building Grade: n/a      Target Date: 11.02.2025**

**Agent: CMI Planners, 38b Airfield Road, Toomebridge, BT41 3SQ**

**Applicant: James Andrew Blair McNeill, 78 Gracehill Road, Armoy, BT53 8JE**

**Objections: 0      Petitions of Objection: 0**

**Support: 0      Petitions of Support: 0**

**Drawings and additional information are available to view on the Planning Portal- <https://planningregister.planningssystemni.gov.uk/>**

## Executive Summary

- This is an application for outline permission for a dwelling on a farm.
- The application site is located within the rural area as identified within the Northern Area Plan (NAP) 2016. The site is located 150m NE of no. 78 Gracehill Road.
- The site is located a minimum of 84m from the nearest farm building, and is visually separated with a bend in the road, vegetation and its location on the opposite side of Gracehill Road. Justification for the proposed siting is not sufficient in siting the proposed dwelling away from the farm group, and there are other appropriate sites within the ownership of the applicant which would be policy compliant.
- The proposed site lacks long established natural boundaries and relies primarily on new planting in order to integrate.
- Consultees have raised no objections subject to proposed conditions.
- The proposed development is considered unacceptable under Policies CTY1, CTY10 and CTY13 and CTY14 of PPS21
- **Refusal** is Recommended.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

- 1.1 That the Committee has taken into consideration and agrees with the reasons for the recommendation set out in section 9 and the policies and guidance in sections 7 and 8 and resolves to **REFUSE** outline planning permission for the reasons set out in section 10.

## **2 SITE LOCATION & DESCRIPTION**

- 2.1 The application site is located within the rural area as identified within the Northern Area Plan (NAP) 2016 and is not subject to any specific environmental designations. The site is located on land 150m NE of no. 78 Gracehill Road.
- 2.2 The site is a square shaped plot of land located along the roadside, comprising the SW corner of a vacant agricultural field. The site is defined on its SW and SE boundaries by existing hedgerow and post and wire fencing, and the remaining boundaries are currently undefined and open to the remainder of the field. The site is relatively level to the road, with access currently obtained by a field gate within the southern corner.

## **3 RELEVANT HISTORY**

There is no recent relevant planning history on this land.

Immediately NE of the site:

LA01/2023/0930/O

70m S of 73 Gracehill Road. Proposed site for dwelling and domestic garage as Policy CTY10 – Dwelling on a Farm.

Permission Refused 16<sup>th</sup> April 2024.

## **4 THE APPLICATION**

- 4.1 The application seeks Outline Planning Permission for a Dwelling & Domestic Garage under Policy CTY10 (Dwelling on a Farm)”
- 4.2 The potential impact this proposal on Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas and Ramsar sites has been assessed in accordance with the requirements of Regulation 43 (1) of the Conservation (Natural Habitats, etc) Regulations (Northern Ireland)

1995 (as amended). The Proposal would not be likely to have a significant effect on the Features, conservation objectives or status of any of these sites.

## **5 PUBLICITY & CONSULTATIONS**

### **5.1 External**

There are no letters of support or objection to the proposal – No neighbours have been notified.

### **5.2 Internal**

**DFI Roads** – No objection

**Environmental Health** – No objection

**NI Water** – No objection

**DAERA** - No objection

**NIEA (WMU)** - No objection

## **MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

- 6.1 Section 45(1) of the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 requires that all applications must have regard to the local plan, so far as material to the application, and all other material considerations. Section 6(4) states that in making any determination where regard is to be had to the local development plan, the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 6.2 The development plan is:
- The Northern Area Plan 2016 (NAP)
- 6.3 The Regional Development Strategy (RDS) is a material consideration.
- 6.4 The Strategic Planning Policy Statement for Northern Ireland (SPPS) is a material consideration. As set out in the SPPS, until such times as a new local plan strategy is adopted, councils will apply specified retained operational policies.
- 6.5 Due weight should be given to the relevant policies in the development plan.
- 6.6 All material considerations and any policy conflicts are identified in the “Considerations and Assessment” section of the report.

## 7 RELEVANT POLICIES & GUIDANCE

[The Northern Area Plan 2016](#)

[The Strategic Planning Policy Statement \(SPPS\)](#)

[PPS 3: Access, Movement and Parking](#)

[PPS 21: Sustainable Development in the Countryside](#)

[Building on Tradition Design Guide](#)

## 8 CONSIDERATIONS & ASSESSMENT

- 8.1 The main considerations in the determination of this application relate to the principle of development, integration, and access.

### **Planning Policy**

- 8.2 The site is located within the open countryside and is not subject to any specific zonings or designations.
- 8.3 The proposal must be considered having regard to the NAP 2016, SPPS, PPS policy documents and supplementary planning guidance specified above.

### **Principle of Development**

- 8.4 Policy CTY 1 outlines the types of development which are acceptable in principle in the countryside, one of which is the provision of a dwelling on a farm under CTY10. CTY10 states that planning permission will be granted for a dwelling house on a farm where all of the following criteria can be met:
- the farm business is currently active and has been established for at least 6 years;
  - no dwellings or development opportunities out-with settlement limits have been sold off from the farm holding within 10 years of the date of the application. This provision will only apply from 25 November 2008; and
  - the new building is visually linked or sited to cluster with an established group of buildings on the farm and where practicable, access to the dwelling should be obtained from an existing lane.

Exceptionally, consideration may be given to an alternative site elsewhere on the farm, provided there are no other sites available at another group of buildings on the farm or out-farm, and where there are either:

- demonstrable health and safety reasons; or
- verifiable plans to expand the farm business at the existing building group(s).

- 8.5 DAERA has confirmed that the Farm Business has been in existence for more than 6 years and has claimed payments through the Basic Payment Scheme or Agri Environment Scheme in each of the last 6 years. The application site is on land for which payments are currently being claimed by the farm business.
- 8.6 A history search of the Farm Business ID and maps confirmed no approvals on the farm within 10 years of this application. Histories within the farmlands are as follows. D/2011/0035/O for a replacement dwelling was approved in November 2011, with no subsequent RM application submitted, and no works commenced. LA01/2023/0087/O on lands adjacent to the site was refused in April 2024. A further application (LA01/2023/0887/O) on the farmlands at Kilraughts Road was refused in February 2025 for a dwelling within a cluster.
- 8.7 Outside of the farmlands, LA01/2024/0130/CLOPUD was submitted by Jackie McNeill and approved in November 2024. This confirmed that a material start had been made on a replacement dwelling approval (C/2009/0606/F) at Liswatty Road prior to the original approval expiring. As this site is not within the lands included in the farm maps, it does not fall within the scope of consideration for criterion (b) of CTY10. The proposal complies with criteria (a) and (b) of CTY10.
- 8.8 The main farmhouse is located at no. 78 and is surrounded by a number of agricultural buildings to the east, south and west. There is a very clear grouping of farm buildings at this location. The closest part of the application site is located 84m from the nearest building within this group of buildings, on the opposite side of Gracehill Road. This physical separation is enhanced by the site not being readily visible from the farm grouping, and vice versa due to intervening mature trees and vegetation. On approach from the South West the farm dwelling sits against the backdrop of tall mature trees, and the site is not visible until having largely passed the farm holding and rounded a

slight bend in the road. Similarly, on approach from the North East the farm buildings are largely screened from view with only brief, filtered views attainable until the application site has been passed and rounding the bend in the road.

- 8.9 Paragraph 5.41 of PPS21 advises that a dwelling is acceptable where the existing group of buildings is well landscaped, which makes the degree of visual connection between the two very limited, however this is only the case when the proposed site is adjacent to the group. In this instance, the application site is on the opposite side of the road and is some 84m from the nearest building. Given the size of the proposed site, a dwelling could be sited more than 100m from the group of buildings, and the physical and visual separation would remain excessive. Regardless of the presence of mature landscaping the application site appears both physical and visually removed from the existing farm grouping and would read as an and would neither cluster or visually link with the established grouping to a satisfactory degree.
- 8.10 CTY10 requires that where an alternative site is proposed, appropriate and demonstrable evidence from a competent and independent authority such as the HSE or Environmental Health to justify the siting. No such evidence has been submitted. Additionally, evidence relating to future expansion of the farm business may include planning permissions, building control approvals or contractual obligations to supply farm produce.
- 8.11 A planning application for a poultry unit exists on lands to the west of the existing farmyard under application reference LA01/2024/1254/F. This application is undetermined and remains under consideration. Additionally, a CLOPUD application has been submitted to the council for the erection of a farm storage shed, located between the application site and the group of farm buildings. The site of the CLOPUD application is on the opposite side of the road from the application site. To date no decision has been reached, and the location remains undeveloped. This submission of a CLOPUD is not verifiable evidence of future expansion of the farm business. Given the proposed siting of the shed remains undeveloped, the CLOPUD does not address the issue of the application site's separation from the farm grouping and can only be given limited weight.
- 8.12 A number of alternative sites were presented to the agent and applicant on a without prejudice basis which, would be considered to

visually link and/or cluster to the group of farm buildings in order to satisfy the requirements of criterion (c).

- 8.13 Land to the west of the farm buildings was discounted by the agent on account of a currently undecided planning application for a poultry unit further along Gracehill Road. As the application is undecided it holds minimal weight when assessing potential siting for a dwelling. A dwelling in this location would benefit from the backdrop of existing farm buildings and would have a clear visual link.
- 8.14 Two parcels of land to the north of the farm buildings, either side of a small stream were proposed. These lands are partially within the floodplain, however NI Flood Maps show that the flooding is restricted to the eastern corner of the field to the west of the stream and to along the western boundary of the field to the east of the stream. Officials consider a dwelling could be sited within these areas, outside of the identified floodplains, resulting in a suitable site for a dwelling in relation to the group of farm buildings. The agent submitted a diagram indicating the extent of flooding however this is not reflective of NI Flood Maps, which show considerably less recorded flooding. When viewed on approach towards the farm in both directions, a dwelling on either site would be visually associated with the farm buildings and benefit from the mature vegetation along the watercourse which would provide a backdrop and screening to the site.
- 8.15 Land to the South East of the group of buildings would require access through the group of farm buildings which may give rise to health and safety concerns. However, these issues would have to be demonstrated and would be considered if no other alternative sites were available.
- 8.16 There are other more appropriate sites available on the farm holding which would provide a satisfactory level of visual linkage and cluster with the existing farm grouping and it has not been adequately demonstrated that these sites are not feasible. There are no overriding reasons as to why a dwelling being sited at the application site is necessary. The proposal fails to satisfy criterion (c) of CTY10.

## **Integration**

- 8.17 Policy CTY1 of PS21 and paragraph 6.70 of the SPPS state that all proposals must be sited and designed to integrate into their setting,

respect rural character and be appropriately designed. Policy CTY13 states that permission will be granted for a building in the countryside where it can be visually integrated into the surrounding landscape, and it is of an appropriate design.

- 8.18 The application site is open to the wider field, with the NE and NW boundaries currently undefined. Existing boundaries are comprised of hedgerow and are not sufficient in providing a suitable degree of enclosure and if approved, a dwelling at this roadside location would be incongruous with the landscape, regardless of scale and design.
- 8.19 Roadside hedgerow removal would be required to facilitate the proposed access and visibility splays. Approx. 180m of new planting is required to define the site, as well as the relocation of 36m of roadside hedgerow which currently bounds the field to the SW of the site. This level of additional and augmented planting is excessive and indicates the lack of long-established natural boundaries, and the reliance of new landscaping. The proposal fails criteria (b), (c) and (g) of Policy CTY13.

### **Access**

- 8.20 DfI Roads was consulted as the competent authority on road and traffic matters. Roads offer no objection to the proposal and require a plan at RM stage indicating the required visibility splays of 2.4m x 130m. Subject to Roads' condition being met, the proposal would not prejudice public or road safety and will not negatively impact the flow of traffic along Gracehill Road. As Gracehill Road is not a Protected Route, consideration under Policy AMP3 is not required. The proposal complies with Policy AMP2 of PPS3.

## **9 CONCLUSION**

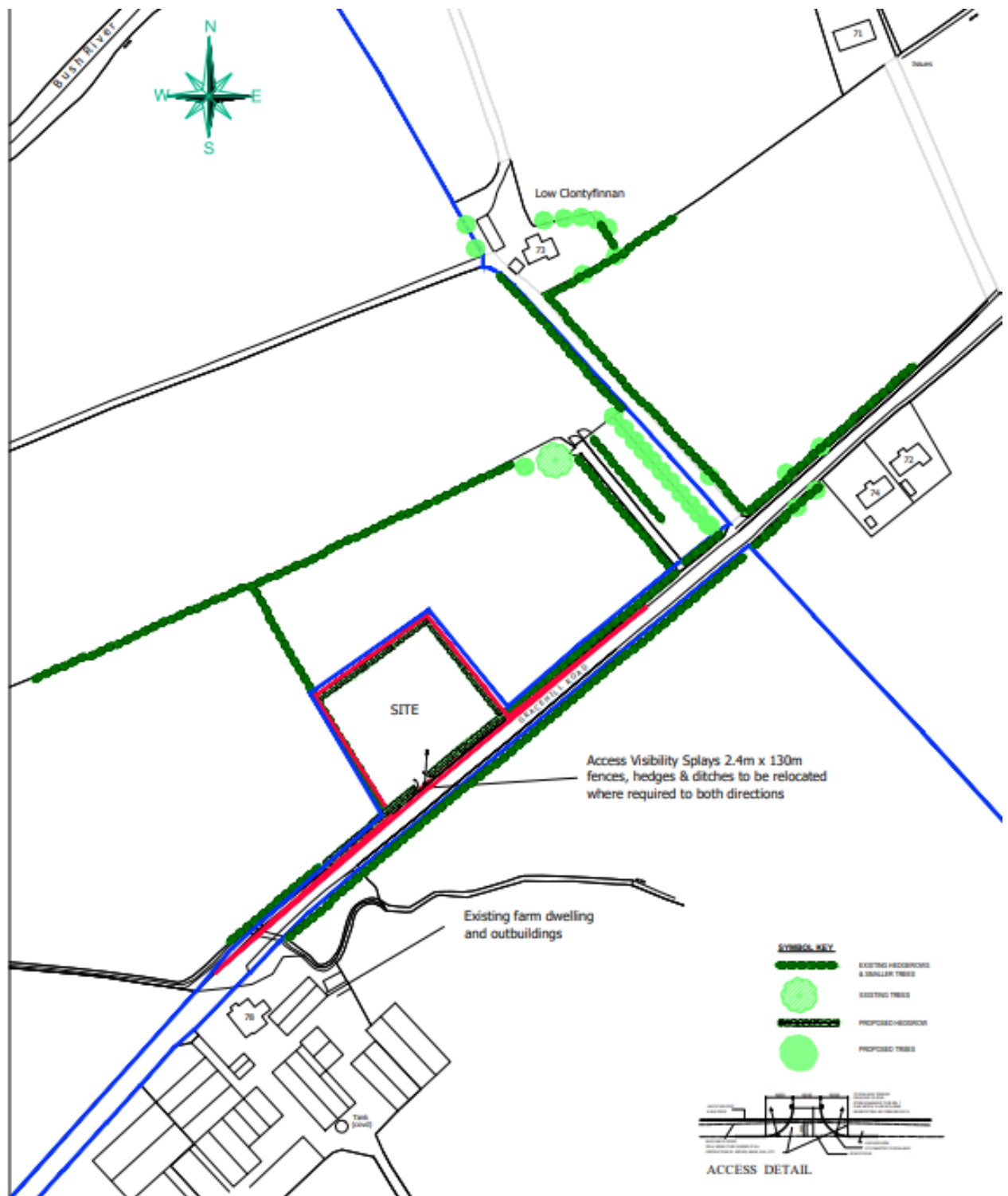
- 9.1 The proposal is considered unacceptable in this location having regard to the Northern Area Plan, SPPS, planning policy and material considerations. The application site fails to visually link or cluster with the existing group of buildings on the farm, and sufficient justification for siting away from the group of farm buildings has not been provided. The site lacks long established natural boundaries and relies primarily on the use of new landscaping in order to integrate into the landscape. Additionally, the proposal is contrary to Policy CTY 1 as it has not been demonstrated that this development is essential at

this location does not fall within any of the acceptable types of development in the countryside. The proposal is contrary to Paragraphs 6.70 and 6.73 of the SPPS and Policies CTY1, CTY 10, and CTY13 of PPS21. Refusal is recommended.

## **10 Reasons for Refusal**

1. The proposal is contrary to Paragraph 6.73 of the Strategic Planning Policy Statement and Policy CTY1 of Planning Policy Statement 21, Sustainable Development in the Countryside in that there are no overriding reasons why this development is essential in this rural location.
2. The proposal is contrary to Paragraph 6.73 of the Strategic Planning Policy Statement and Policy CTY10 of Planning Policy Statement 21, Sustainable Development in the Countryside in that a dwelling would fail visually link or cluster with the existing buildings on the farm.
3. The proposal is contrary to paragraph 6.70 of the SPPS and Policy CTY 13 of Planning Policy Statement 21, Sustainable Development in the Countryside, in that the proposal would fail to visually integrate with existing buildings on the farm and is unable to provide a suitable degree of enclosure for the building to integrate into the landscape, and would rely primarily on the use of new landscaping for integration.

# Site location Plan



## Referral Reason



### Annex 1

#### Template for Requesting Referral of a Contentious Delegated Decision to Issue' List Planning Application to Planning Committee for Determination

The Protocol for the Operation of the Planning Committee provides for an Elected Member to request a planning application listed on the weekly list of 'contentious delegated decisions ready' to be referred to Planning Committee for determination. This request must be received by the Planning Department no later than 10am on the Monday following the issuing of the contentious list and submitted via email to [planning@causewaycoastandglens.gov.uk](mailto:planning@causewaycoastandglens.gov.uk).

<b>Planning Reference</b>	LA01/2024/1183/0
<b>Elected Member Name</b>	Councillor Jonathan McAuley
<b>Contact Details</b>	
<b>Refusal Reasons</b>	<p>The proposal is contrary to Paragraph 6.73 of the Strategic Planning Policy Statement and Policy CTY1 of Planning Policy Statement 21, Sustainable Development in the Countryside in that there are no overriding reasons why this development is essential in this rural location and could not be located within a settlement.</p> <p>The proposal is contrary to Paragraph 6.73 of the Strategic Planning Policy Statement and Policy CTY10 of Planning Policy Statement 21, Sustainable Development in the Countryside in that a dwelling would fail visually link or cluster with the existing buildings on the farm.</p> <p>The proposal is contrary to paragraph 6.70 of the SPPS and Policy CTY 13 of Planning Policy Statement 21, Sustainable Development in the Countryside, in that the proposal would fail to visually integrate with existing buildings on the farm and is unable to provide a suitable degree of enclosure for the building to integrate into the landscape, and would rely primarily on the use of new landscaping for integration.</p>

The site is for a retiring farmer, namely my husband and I and is located opposite the main farm holding which our son is taking over.

The surrounding fields are affected by flooding and there are plans submitted to Causeway Coast Council for new chicken housing. Additionally plans are at an advanced stage for new cattle housing on the farm.

We strongly disagree that there is no visual linkage between the site and our farm holding, To access the visual linkage with the established buildings on the farm we have identify specific vantage points from the main road where iphysical and visual separation from the main farm group would be minimal.

Given its setting from the Gracehill Road and its positioning the site would have inter visibility with the main farm group. Given the issues with smell and flooding eluded to on other sites suggested by Council it is the closest available site to the main farm group. Travelling along the road there would be little physical and visual separation between the proposed and existing buildings from any identified public aspect.

In these particular circumstances, the proposal would not conflict with Criterion (c) and therefore finds support in Policy CTY10.

The site is bounded to its west by an established hedge line and to the south by an established road side hedge. The site will not be is visible travelling from the west until practically at the sites entrance. Views are available travelling from the east but this is short ranged and set with the back drop of mature vegetation.

The proposals have satisfied all statutory bodies from DFI Roads, NIEA, NI Water and therefore all environmental aspects have been satisfied at this outline stage.

