
From: On Behalf Of Kerr, Angus
Sent: 14 January 2019 3:21 PM
To: conor.hughes
Cc:
Subject: LA05/2018/1154/O and LA05/2018/1155/F - DfI Notification request - Blaris LCCC

Conor

Please see attached letter and Directions from Angus Kerr, Chief Planner & Director of Regional Planning, DfI for your attention.

Please note that **no** hard copy will follow.

Many thanks



- Personal Secretary for Angus Kerr, Chief Planner & Director of Regional Planning
| Department for Infrastructure |

Please consider the environment - do you really need to print this e-mail?

Regional Planning Directorate



Department for

Infrastructure

An Roinn

Bonneagair

www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk

Mr Conor Hughes
Planning Manager
Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council
Civic Headquarters
Lagan Valley Island
LISBURN
BT27 4RL

Clarence Court
10-18 Adelaide Street
BELFAST
BT2 8GB
Tel: 0300 200 7830

Email:

Your Reference: LA05/2018/1154/O and
LA05/2018/1155/F

Our Reference:

14 January 2019

Dear Mr Hughes

LA05/2018/1154/O: PROPOSED MIXED USE DEVELOPMENT TO INCLUDE NEW HOUSING (1300 DWELLINGS) AND COMMERCIAL FLOOR SPACE (770,000 SQ. FT.) 1.6KM M1-KNOCKMORE LINK ROAD, RIVERSIDE PARKLAND AND ANCILLARY WORKS AT LANDS AT BLARIS LISBURN (LANDS BETWEEN EXISTING M1 JUNCTION 8/ A101 ROUNDABOUT AND MOIRA ROAD/ KNOCKMORE ROAD JUNCTION)

LA05/2018/1155/F: CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW LINK ROAD (1.6KM) CONNECTING THE EXISTING M1 JUNCTION 8/A101 ROUNDABOUT TO EXISTING MOIRA/ KNOCKMORE ROAD JUNCTION ON LANDS AT BLARIS LISBURN (LANDS BETWEEN EXISTING M1 JUNCTION 8/A101 ROUNDABOUT AND MOIRA ROAD/KNOCKMORE ROAD JUNCTION)

With reference to the above applications, I would wish to draw your attention to the enclosed directions by the Department for Infrastructure (DfI) under the powers conferred on it by Articles 17 and 18 of The Planning (General Development Procedure) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015.

The directions have been made in order that the Department has an opportunity to assess, prior to a decision being made on the applications by your council, if it wishes to require that the applications are referred to it for determination.

Accordingly it is the Department's view that it would be appropriate for Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council to notify DfI in relation to the application by Neptune Carleton LLP for a mixed use development to include new housing (1300 dwellings) and commercial

E-mail: planning@infrastructure-ni.gov.uk

Website: www.planningni.gov.uk

floor space (770,000 sq. ft.) 1.6km M1-Knockmore link road, riverside parkland and ancillary works at Lands at Blaris Lisburn.

In addition, DfI also require to be notified of the associated access and road application (LA05/2018/1155/F), construction of a new link road (1.6km) connecting the existing M1 junction 8/A101 roundabout to existing Moira/ Knockmore Road Junction at lands at Blaris Lisburn (lands between existing M1 junction 8/A101 roundabout and Moira Road/Knockmore Road junction).

Please note these directions do not commit DfI to 'calling in' any such applications, but it does reserve the right to intervene.

Yours sincerely

ANGUS KERR
Chief Planner
& Director of Regional Planning

THE PLANNING (NOTIFICATION OF APPLICATIONS) (LISBURN AND CASTLEREAGH CITY COUNCIL) LA05/2018/1154/O PROPOSED MIXED USE DEVELOPMENT TO INCLUDE NEW HOUSING (1300 DWELLINGS) AND COMMERCIAL FLOOR SPACE (770,000 SQ. FT.) 1.6KM M1-KNOCKMORE LINK ROAD, RIVERSIDE PARKLAND AND ANCILLARY WORKS AT LANDS AT BLARIS LISBURN (LANDS BETWEEN EXISTING M1 JUNCTION 8/ A101 ROUNDABOUT AND MOIRA ROAD/ KNOCKMORE ROAD JUNCTION) DIRECTION 2018.

The Department for Infrastructure makes the following Direction, in exercise of powers conferred on it by Articles 17 and 18 of the Planning (General Development Procedure) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015.

1.0 Commencement

This direction comes into operation on 14 January 2019.

2.0 Interpretation

In this Direction:

“the 2011 Act” means the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011;

“assessments” means any Flood Risk assessments, Environmental Impact assessments, Retail Impact assessments, Transport assessments or any other assessments that may be submitted with the application;

“council” means Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council;

“the Department” means the Department for Infrastructure;

“pre-application material” means any material submitted with the planning application as prescribed by section 27 of the 2011 Act and regulations 4 and 5 of the Development Management Regulations;

“requisite notice” means notice in the appropriate form set out in Schedule 1 to the GDPO or in a form substantially to the same effect;

3.0 Information to the Department

3.1 In the event that the Council reach a recommendation on this application by Neptune Carleton LLP for a **proposed mixed use development to include new housing (1300 dwellings) and commercial floor space (770,000 sq. ft.) 1.6km M1-Knockmore link road, riverside parkland and ancillary works at Lands at Blaris Lisburn (lands between existing M1 Junction 8/ A101 roundabout and Moira Road/ Knockmore Road junction)** they shall under the terms of Article 18 of The Planning (General Development Procedure) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015 provide the Department with the following information:

- (a) a copy of the application (including copies of any accompanying plans, drawings, statements, assessments, pre-application material and any other supporting information);
- (b) a copy of the requisite notice;
- (c) a copy of any representations made to the council in respect of the application;
- (d) a copy of any report on the application prepared by the council;
- (e) a copy of a statement, where applicable, setting out the councils reasons for proposing to grant planning permission, in cases where- i. the application would significantly prejudice the implementation of the local development plan’s objectives and policies; ii. the application would not be in accordance with any appropriate marine plan adopted under the Marine Act (Northern Ireland) 2013; and /or iii. a significant objection has been received by a statutory consultee or Government Department

3.2 Where the council holds the information set out in paragraph 3.1 (a) to (d), it may comply with some or all of the requirements to provide this information to the Department by means of an e-mail to the Department

containing a link, or a series of links, to the relevant pages on the council's website.

4.0 Restriction on the Determination of Planning Permission

- 4.1 The council must not determine the development referred to in paragraph 3.1 before the Department has notified the council that it does not intend to issue a direction under section 29(1) of the 2011 Act, in respect of that application.

ANGUS KERR

A senior officer of the Department for Infrastructure

THE PLANNING (NOTIFICATION OF APPLICATIONS) (LISBURN AND CASTLEREAGH CITY COUNCIL) LA05/2018/1155/F CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW LINK ROAD (1.6KM) CONNECTING THE EXISTING M1 JUNCTION 8/A101 ROUNDABOUT TO EXISTING MOIRA/KNOCKMORE ROAD JUNCTION ON LANDS AT BLARIS LISBURN (LANDS BETWEEN EXISTING M1 JUNCTION 8/A101 ROUNDABOUT AND MOIRA ROAD/KNOCKMORE ROAD JUNCTION) DIRECTION 2018.

The Department for Infrastructure makes the following Direction, in exercise of powers conferred on it by Articles 17 and 18 of the Planning (General Development Procedure) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015.

1.0 Commencement

This direction comes into operation on 14 January 2019.

2.0 Interpretation

In this Direction:

“the 2011 Act” means the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011;

“assessments” means any Flood Risk assessments, Environmental Impact assessments, Retail Impact assessments, Transport assessments or any other assessments that may be submitted with the application;

“council” means Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council;

“the Department” means the Department for Infrastructure;

“pre-application material” means any material submitted with the planning application as prescribed by section 27 of the 2011 Act and regulations 4 and 5 of the Development Management Regulations;

“requisite notice” means notice in the appropriate form set out in Schedule 1 to the GDPO or in a form substantially to the same effect;

3.0 Information to the Department

3.1 In the event that the Council reach a recommendation on this application by Neptune Carleton LLP for construction of a new link road (1.6km) connecting the existing m1 junction 8/a101 roundabout to existing Moira/Knockmore road junction on lands at Blaris Lisburn, they shall under the terms of Article 18 of The Planning (General Development Procedure) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015 provide the Department with the following information:

- (a) a copy of the application (including copies of any accompanying plans, drawings, statements, assessments, pre-application material and any other supporting information);
- (b) a copy of the requisite notice;
- (c) a copy of any representations made to the council in respect of the application;
- (d) a copy of any report on the application prepared by the council;
- (e) a copy of a statement, where applicable, setting out the councils reasons for proposing to grant planning permission, in cases where- i. the application would significantly prejudice the implementation of the local development plan’s objectives and policies; ii. the application would not be in accordance with any appropriate marine plan adopted under the Marine Act (Northern Ireland) 2013; and /or iii. a significant objection has been received by a statutory consultee or Government Department.

3.2 Where the council holds the information set out in paragraph 3.1 (a) to (d), it may comply with some or all of the requirements to provide this information to the Department by means of an e-mail to the Department containing a link, or a series of links, to the relevant pages on the council’s website.

4.0 Restriction on the Determination of Planning Permission

- 4.1 The Council must not determine the development referred to in paragraph 3.1 before the Department has notified the council that it does not intend to issue a direction under section 29(1) of the 2011 Act, in respect of that application.

ANGUS KERR

A senior officer of the Department for Infrastructure

From:
Sent: 02 April 2021 15:06
To: Kerr, Angus
Cc:
Subject: Blaris/Sprucefield letter to Dfl

Good afternoon Angus,

Please find attached correspondence from Aidan Thatcher, Director of Planning and Building Control.

Kind Regards,

PA/Secretary to Director of City Regeneration and Development

Place and Economy Department | Belfast City Council |

www.belfastcity.gov.uk | www.facebook.com/belfastcitycouncil | www.twitter.com/belfastcc

The information contained in or attached to this message is intended only for the people to whom it is addressed. If you are not the intended recipient, any use, storage, disclosure or copying of this information is unauthorised and prohibited. This information may be confidential or subject to legal privilege. If you have received this email in error please notify the sender immediately by using the reply facility in your email software and then delete the email from your inbox. The contents of this message do not represent the expressed view of Belfast City Council unless that is clearly stated. Belfast City Council cannot accept liability in the event that the onward transmission, opening, or use of this message and/or any attachments adversely affects the recipient's systems or data.

Place and Economy Department
Planning and Building Control



Belfast
City Council

Our Ref: 20210401AT/nm
(Please quote at all times)

Mr Angus Kerr
Chief Planner & Director of Regional Planning
Department for Infrastructure
Clarence Court
10-18 Adelaide Street
BELFAST
BT2 8GB

Belfast Planning Service
Cecil Ward Building
4-10 Linenhall Street
BELFAST
BT2 8BP

By Email:

Tel: 028 90 500510
Date: 2 April 2021

Dear Angus,

Proposed mixed use development to include new housing and commercial floor space including a link Road at Blaris, Lisburn (planning reference LA05/2018/1154/O & LA05/2018/1155/F)

I have recently become aware that the two major planning applications comprising mixed use development for 1300 dwellings and 754,000 ft² of commercial floorspace with a link road at Blaris, appear to be progressing to a decision from the Council. In line with our comments on the amended LDP consultation I would highlight a number of concerns regarding the sustainability of the proposal and the potential impact that it would have on the wider region.

The primary concern is that the proposal appears to deviate significantly from the local development plan both in terms of the incumbent plan, the Lisburn Area Plan 2001 and indeed the draft BMAP 2015. The scale and form of the proposal is such that it is likely to provide a level of housing and traffic generation that are both unjustifiable and unnecessary. Furthermore they have the potential to remove the potential for the delivery of more appropriate development which would be in accordance with regional planning policy. The proposed development is based on a car dependency that would not further a sustainable approach and runs contrary not only to planning policy in terms of the Regional Development Strategy 2035 but also wider environmental aspirations of the Programme for Government.

I understand that your Department issued a direction under Articles 17 and 18 of the Planning (General Development Procedure) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015 on 14 January 2019 where you instructed Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council to notify you in relation to the application. That direction instructs the Council not to determine the development before the Department has notified the council that it does not intend to issue a direction under section 29(1) of the 2011 Act.

Given the scale and likely non-conformity with the local development plan the Department ought to consider whether it should be called in. This is even more pertinent in the context of newly emerging LDPs and I would make the following additional comments for your consideration in this regard.

The entire site is currently located outside of the settlement limit in the incumbent Lisburn Area Plan 2001 (LAP 2001) and a large proportion of the site to the west of the proposed Knockmore link Road is located outside of the proposed settlement limit in draft BMAP 2015.

The Regional Development Strategy 2035 (RDS) seeks to protect a significant proportion of this site as a key location for economic growth and it is a Major Employment Zoning (LC05) designated in draft BMAP 2015 and was reserved for low density business/industrial uses only.

The public Inquiry into draft BMAP 2015 considered at length the suitability of part of this site for residential use. The Planning Appeals Commission (PAC) concluded that *“no part of this zoning or any additional lands around the zoning should be allocated for housing in the Plan because of the importance of the zoning for employment.”*

The reasoning provided for this was twofold:

1. The *“site is a prime location for employment use to meet the employment needs of the BMA and the strategic directions of the RDS”*; and
2. That *“this area is far from ideal for housing purposes in view of its relatively isolated location from other housing and the fact that it is surrounded by major employment uses, retail development and roads infrastructure.”*

The Zoning was subsequently retained in the final version of BMAP as a Major Employment Location only, without any reference to residential development being considered an appropriate land-use component. There were also a number of stipulations that a Masterplan is required for the whole area and that uses are limited to Industrial and Business Use Classes and a number of other non-residential uses including hotel, school, healthcare facilities, car showrooms and small scale retail development.

No persuasive evidence has been provided within the submission or indeed within any of the annual Housing Monitoring Reports that suggests that there is a shortage of land for housing in the Lisburn City area, or the District as a whole. Based on the number of units completed per annum over the past four years and the available land in the Lisburn City Area, it is considered that available land could accommodate current rates of growth over the next 16 years. In this context there would appear to be no justification for releasing further land outside of the development plan process and beyond the settlement limit for development. The ability to subsidise the costs of developing a new link road, is unlikely to justify allowing this scale of residential development outside of the settlement limits. Given the PAC's clear findings in respect of the potential suitability of this site for residential use, the proposal is likely to fall well short of any rational basis for consideration at this stage.

You will also be aware that LCCC has only recently submitted their draft Plan Strategy to the Department, on 22 March 2021, in preparation for their Independent Examination (IE). The application site is located within a proposed designation of the Plan Strategy. This must raise concerns around the timing of potential decisions in respect of such a strategic applications. It could be considered premature and therefore inappropriate for this strategic site to be considered through the development management process whilst designations are being presented as part of a Plan Strategy for consideration at IE.

The applicant appears to place significant reliance on the West Lisburn Development Framework (WLDF). The Framework is not a statutory planning document, therefore determinative weight cannot be afforded to it in assessing this planning application and it should instead be assessed against the prevailing statutory policy provisions. This is particular relevant given the sensitivity of the proposed development in terms of the departure from existing regional policy and current local plans.

I would appreciate your consideration of the matters raised and would be happy to speak to you on the matter.

Yours sincerely

Aidan Thatcher
Director of Planning and Building Control

From: on behalf of Kerr, Angus
Sent: 26 April 2021 11:44
To: Aidan Thatcher
Cc:
Subject: DFIPG-096/21 - Blaris, Lisburn
Attachments: DFIPG 096 21 Letter to Aidan Thatcher, BCC re Blaris, Lisburn - 26.04.21....pdf

Mr Thatcher

Please see attached letter from Angus Kerr, Chief Planner & Director of Regional Planning, DfI for your attention.

Kind regards



Personal Secretary for Angus Kerr, Chief Planner & Director of Regional Planning
| Department for Infrastructure

Please consider the environment - do you really need to print this e-mail?

Regional Planning Directorate



Mr Aidan Thatcher
Director of Planning & Building Control
Belfast Planning Service
Cecil Ward Building
4-10 Linenhall Street Belfast
BT2 8AB

Clarence Court
10-18 Adelaide Street
BELFAST
BT2 8GB
Tel: (028) 9054 0645

Email:

Your reference: 20210401AT/nm
Our reference: DFIPG-096/21

26 April 2021

Dear Mr Thatcher

Proposed mixed use development to include new housing and commercial floor space including a link Road at Blaris, Lisburn (planning reference LA05/2018/1154/O & LA05/2018/1155/F).

Thank you for your correspondence, dated 2 April 2021, relating to the above referenced planning applications currently being processed by Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council (LCCC).

As you have indicated, the Department has issued directions in respect of these applications under the powers conferred upon it by Articles 17 and 18 of the Planning (General Development Procedure) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015. I can confirm that the Department has not yet been notified by the council. However, I can assure you that the concerns you have outlined will be fully considered by the Department as part of its overall assessment once the notifications have been received.

When the notification process has been completed, I will write to you again to let you know whether or not the Department has decided to call in the applications for determination.

Yours sincerely

ANGUS KERR
Chief Planner &
Director of Regional Planning

E-mail: planning@infrastructure-ni.gov.uk
Website: www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/topics/planning

From: planning [<mailto:planning@lisburncastlereagh.gov.uk>]

Sent: 12 May 2021 17:34

To: Kerr, Angus

Subject: FW: LA05/2018/1154/O and LA05/2018/1155/F - DfI Notification request - Blaris LCCC

Mr Kerr,

Please find attached a response and associated documents from Conor Hughes, Head of Planning and Capital Development to your correspondence of 14 January 2019.

A copy of your letter is attached for your ease of reference.

Many thanks

Planning Unit

Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council

Civic Headquarters, Lagan Valley Island, Lisburn BT27 4RL

www.lisburncastlereagh.gov.uk



From:

On Behalf Of Kerr, Angus

Sent: 14 January 2019 15:21

To: Conor Hughes

Cc:

Subject: LA05/2018/1154/O and LA05/2018/1155/F - DfI Notification request - Blaris LCCC

Conor

Please see attached letter and Directions from Angus Kerr, Chief Planner & Director of Regional Planning, DfI for your attention.

Please note that no hard copy will follow.

Many thanks



| Department for Infrastructure |
0300 200 7830

- Personal Secretary for Angus Kerr, Chief Planner & Director of Regional Planning

Please consider the environment - do you really need to print this e-mail?

Please Proceed With Caution

This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

-IT Helpdesk

As this e-mail may contain confidential or legally privileged information, if you are not, or suspect that you are not, the above named, or the person responsible for delivering the message to the above named, delete or destroy the email and any attachments immediately. The contents of this e-mail may not be disclosed to, nor used by, anyone other than the above named. We will not accept any liability (in negligence or otherwise) arising from any third party acting, or refraining from acting, on such information. Opinions, conclusions and other information expressed in such messages are not given or endorsed by the Council, unless otherwise indicated in writing by an authorised representative independent of such messages. We may monitor all incoming and outgoing emails in line with current legislation. You should therefore be aware that if you send an e-mail to a person within the Council it may be subject to any monitoring deemed necessary by the organisation. We cannot guarantee that this message or any attachment is virus free or has not been intercepted and amended, thus it remains your responsibility to ensure that viruses do not adversely affect you. Any personal data provided by you will be processed in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulations (2018) and the UK Data Protection Act (2018), for further details please view the Privacy Notice on our website. As a public body, the Council may be required to disclose this e-mail (or any response to it) under UK Data Protection and Freedom of Information legislation, unless the information in it is covered by an exemption.



12 May 2021

Mr Angus Kerr
Chief Planner & Director of Regional Planning
Clarence Court
10-18 Adelaide Street
BELFAST
BT2 8GB

By email only

Dear Mr Kerr

The Planning (Notification of Applications) Direction 2017

LA05/2018/1154/O – Proposed mixed use development to include new housing (1300 dwellings) and commercial floor space (754,000 square feet) 1.6km M1-Knockmore link road, riverside parkland and ancillary works on lands at Blaris, Lisburn (lands between existing M1 Junction 8/ A101 roundabout and Moira Road/ Knockmore Road junction); and

LA05/2018/1155/F – Construction of a new link road (1.6km) connecting the existing M1 junction 8/A101 roundabout to existing Moira/Knockmore Road Junction at Lands at Blaris Lisburn (lands between existing M1 junction 8/A101 roundabout and Moira Road/Knockmore Road junction)

I refer to your letter dated 14 January 2019 and to the directions issued by the Department under the powers conferred on it by Articles 17 and 18 of the Planning (General Development Procedure) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015.

In accordance with these directions, the following information is provided:

- (a) A copy of the application (including copies of any accompanying plans, drawings, statements, assessments, pre-application material and any other supporting information); - **available to view on the planning portal website. For convenience I have provided links**

<https://epicpublic.planningni.gov.uk/publicaccess/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=externalDocuments&keyVal=PI4M8CSV30000>

<https://epicpublic.planningni.gov.uk/publicaccess/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=externalDocuments&keyVal=PI4PB5SV30000>

- (b) A copy of the requisite notice; - **P1 Forms are available to view on the planning portal website.**
- (c) A copy of any representations made to the council in respect of the application; - **available to view on the planning portal website.**
- (d) A copy of any report on the application prepared by the Council; - **see attached DM Officer Reports.**
- (e) A copy of a statement, where applicable setting out the councils reasons for proposing to grant planning permission in cases where (i) the applicant would significantly prejudice the implementation of the local development plan objectives and policies; (ii) the application would not be in accordance with any appropriate marine plan adopted under the Marine Act (Northern Ireland) 2013; and/or (iii) a significant objection has been received by a statutory consultee or Government Department. – **See attached Annex A.**

Both applications fall into the major category of development. The DM Officer report in respect of the Mixed Use application acknowledges that the decision is finely balanced and contrary to the extant and emerging local development plan in that it proposes housing on land designated for employment/industry as a major employment location and outside the proposed settlement limit of Lisburn. That said, a number of other material considerations are weighed in the decision making process.

Yours sincerely

Conor Hughes

Conor Hughes
Head of Planning and Capital Development

Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council

Council/Committee	Planning Committee
Date of Committee Meeting	12 April 2021
Committee Interest	Major Application
Application Reference(s)	LA05/2018/1154/O
Date of Application(s)	12 November 2018
District Electoral Area	Downshire West
Proposal Description	Proposed mixed use development to include new housing (1300 dwellings) and commercial floor space (754,000 squarefeet) 1.6km M1-Knockmore link road, riverside parkland and ancillary works
Location	Lands at Blaris, Lisburn (lands between existing M1 Junction 8/ A101 roundabout and Moira Road/ Knockmore Road junction)
Representations	Three
Recommendation	APPROVAL

Summary of Recommendation

1. This application is categorised as a major planning application in accordance with the Development Management Regulations 2015 in that the development comprises 50 units or more on land more than two hectares.
2. The decision is finely balanced and whilst contrary to the extant and emerging local development plan a number of material considerations are weighed in the decision making process and for the reasons set out below the application is presented with a recommendation to approve.
3. BMAP is still not adopted and the question still continues to be asked as to whether an employment zoning can be sustained at West Lisburn. It is accepted that the rationale offered by the Commission for protecting the land for employment was valid at the time.

4. The findings of the Inquiry report are however almost ten years old and the potential of the land has not been realised. There is no evidence available in line with the advice detailed in the Inquiry report to conclude that other large housing schemes contributed or were required to contribute to the funding of the Knockmore Link Road.
5. The latest revision of the RDS retains West Lisburn (Blaris) as a location for major employment important to Northern Ireland as a region. The infrastructure necessary to unlock the potential of the land is not supported in a Plan and the Knockmore Link road is still regarded by the Department as a developer led road scheme.
6. There is an obvious tension between the ambition for West Lisburn as set out in the RDS and the direction offered in the draft Plan as to how this ambition might be realised.
7. The weight to be afforded to the extant and emerging draft plan must be considered against the other material considerations that are presented now and that take account of the passage of time.
8. In the absence of continued interest in the land it is considered that significant material weight is given to the updated evidence which describes the economic benefits that might be accrued from bringing forward mixed use development on the land linked to the delivery of the Knockmore Link road and which must be considered in the context of **no** jobs (my emphasis) having been created in the previous ten years.
9. Whilst the WLDF is a non-statutory document, it is material to the decision making process. In an analysis undertaken by Oxford Economics on behalf of the Council and used to inform the preparation of the framework it was indicated that the mixed use development of this land could generate 3,500 employment-class jobs.
10. In addition, Oxford Economics forecasted that the additional spending by new residents will generate 1,300 jobs across the Council area together with a further 1,600 indirect and induced jobs.
11. Whilst many of these jobs will only follow occupation of the new homes, this analysis does point to the significant economic contribution of this scale of development. It also reduces any argument regarding the need for all of the site to be zoned for employment purposes.
12. That said it is also accepted there is no direct alignment between the geographical extent of the study area for the WLDF and this planning application.
13. The ability to secure the level of employment suggested in the Oxford Economics analysis is predicated on at least 50% of the Blaris lands (as identified in draft BMAP) being available for employment use.

14. As stated above approximately 65% of the application site is for uses other than employment. The challenge for the Council in permitting the loss of this amount of land is whether it will assist in the future in realising the full employment potential of the balance of the land by putting in place the necessary road infrastructure.
15. Approximately 50% of the total employment zoning as envisaged in draft BMAP will remain available (excluding the land in the open countryside beyond) to realise the number of jobs projected in the Oxford Economics analysis.
16. The planning applicant has assembled the necessary land to construct the Knockmore Link Road, brought forward a detailed design for the road in a parallel application and a phasing plan that indicates the road will be constructed in parallel with some of the mixed use development as a first phase of development.
17. This is a significant material consideration in realising the full potential of West Lisburn as a strategic location for employment and it is of equally importance not to undermine further the RDS policy direction in respect of West Lisburn.
18. The concept plan submitted shows how the proposed housing north of the Blaris Road might be extended into the neighbouring lands. The concept only relates to the application site and is without prejudice to what might come forward on the balance of the lands.
19. The developer chose not to bring forward a framework for all the West Lisburn (Blaris) zoning and has asked for this proposal to be considered on its own merits.
20. It is considered that the balance of the land could still be developed for employment with suitable mitigation in the form of a buffer which provides clear segregation between the neighbouring uses. The housing in the application site is supported by all the necessary transport infrastructure, neighbour facilities and open spaces.
21. It could be regarded that the scheme as proposed is an 'urban village' sitting next to an area of major employment where there is ease of access to future employment opportunity without the need to commute long distances.
22. The concept does **not** prejudice the future development of the West Lisburn (Blaris) land for employment.
23. The weight to be afforded to the monetary contribution that this proposal makes to the local economy in terms of economic benefit is treated with caution and not attached significant weight.
24. In general terms however it is accepted that the development of West Lisburn (Blaris) and the wider land is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for the council area and surrounding region.

25. Beyond the economic impact described the location of new and additional employment opportunities of scale at West Lisburn (Blaris), has the potential to generate a positive local environmental dividend in Lisburn by reducing the need for individuals to commute outside the council area for employment.
26. The proximity of the site to known areas of deprivation within the council area and to North and West Belfast (two areas of high unemployment), and the enhanced connectivity proposed by the Knockmore M1 Link Road to the motorway network and the Knockmore Rail Halt to the railway network, means that the employment generated at West Lisburn (Blaris) has the potential to provide positive economic impact not just in Lisburn Castlereagh, but in the wider region and beyond.
27. There is no doubt that the construction of the Knockmore Link Road is key to unlocking the economic development potential of West Lisburn (Blaris).
28. However a clear strategy as to how the West Lisburn (Blaris) site is required looking forward as to how higher value added commercial land use is secured on this and neighbouring land, that would complement, for example, the RUAS agri-food, agri-tech ambitions for Maze Long Kesh, the digital agenda espoused by Belfast Region City Deal or the UK Industrial Strategy.
29. The road gives the Knockmore Hill, Lissue and Ballinderry Road Industrial Estates direct access to the strategic road network.
30. The Knockmore Link road and orbital bus services will provide increased accessibility to employment opportunity socially disadvantaged communities in Lisburn City and beyond. A £500,000 contribution to Translink to realise the orbital bus service is weighed as significant.
31. The significance of the proposal in terms of unlocking the potential of the strategic land reserve at the Maze Long Kesh is also recognised.
32. The continued development of land at the Maze amongst other things as a major centre for tourism in terms of operation of the Eikon exhibition centre by the RUAS and the operation of the aviation museum by the Ulster Aviation Society are constrained by the absence of a link to the strategic road network.
33. This is necessary infrastructure and the road as designed allows for this link to be realised in the future and provides impetus for a master plan to come forward for the balance of the land reserve at the Maze.
34. The proposed affordable housing provision at 10% (and not provided for in current policy) will assist in meeting a continued and pressing need in Lisburn City.
35. Whilst no detail is provided at this stage, there is scope for the proposal to create a quality residential environment incorporating a mix of house types including detached, semi-detached, terrace dwellings and apartments in

accordance with the requirements of the SPPS and policy QD 1 of PPS7 without adversely impacting on the character of the area or have a detrimental impact on the amenity of existing residents in properties adjoining the site.

36. It is considered that the link road and mixed use development comply with the SPPS and PPS 2 in that the environmental information submitted in support of the application demonstrates that it will give rise to no significant adverse effects on habitats or species of ecological or nature conservation value, the proposed development is unlikely to result in any cumulative impact upon these features when considered alone or as demonstrated by way of separate report in combination with the associated link road scheme.
37. The proposal complies with the SPPS and PPS3 in that the proposed link road development and associated internal road works will create an accessible environment for everyone and that the access arrangements proposed to the public road and the creation new accesses to a public road will not prejudice road safety or significantly inconvenience the flow of traffic; nor will the proposal conflict with tests associated with Policy AMP 3 – Access to Protected Routes.
38. Furthermore, the Transport Assessment has allowed for the transport implications of the link road development on the surrounding road network to be evaluated.
39. With regard to environmental effects associated with transport issues the Environmental Statement and associated Addendum demonstrate that the traffic impacts associated with the proposed link road development is sufficient to address the impacts of the proposed mixed use development on the surrounding road network.
40. It also demonstrates that the proposed development has been designed to encourage sustainable modes of transport and that public transport facilities, that the use of public transport will be promoted and implemented through Translink incentives and that it will significantly improve traffic progression through Lisburn City Centre, provide a direct link to the strategic road network for the west of Lisburn and in doing so, create the opportunity for orbital bus services to connect to the existing radial services.
41. The proposed development complies with the SPPS and PPS 6 in that the information submitted demonstrates that there are no known archaeological heritage assets mapped within the footprint of the proposed link road development.
42. It is accepted that standard mitigation measures in relation to a programme of archaeological works as outlined will reduce the significance of effect on the buried archaeological resource to neutral.
43. The proposal is considered to comply with the SPPS and the policy tests associated with PPS 15 in that the proposed link road does present an exception in accordance with criteria (d) in that it is development in respect of

transport infrastructure, which for operational reasons has to be located within the flood plain. It is also sees the delivery of a non-strategic road in accordance with a protected line designated within the local development plan.

44. Furthermore, the evidence submitted with both applications demonstrates that the development will not impede the operational effectiveness of any flood defence or drainage infrastructure or hind access for maintenance. That said, given the nature and scale of the proposed development, it is recommended that detailed drainage design information in provided further consideration at each of the respective reserved matters stages.
45. In terms of drainage, the drainage strategy to discharge Greenfield runoff from the proposed road to the adjacent watercourses and the provision of storage in the form of attenuation ponds and oversized pipes is considered to be acceptable.
46. With regard to the mixed us element, advice confirms that a public water supply and foul sewer within 20 metres of the proposed site. That said, existing pressures within the existing network requires the submission of a solution for the disposal and treatment of foul sewage discharge from the proposal to be submitted and agreed in writing at reserved matters stage
47. Based on the detail contained within the environmental statement, the proposed mitigation and advice from Environmental Health, it is considered that the proposed development complies with the SPPS in that it will not present any significant impacts with regard to Noise and Air Quality.
48. Based on the information provided, it is accepted that the development complies with the SPPS in that the risks of contamination from both the construction of the link road and mixed use development will be low and as such, no mitigation is necessary.

Description of Site and Surroundings

49. The application site is comprised of approximately 112 hectares of lands east and south of the River Lagan, north of the M1 Motorway and west of Blaris cemetery.
50. The Blaris Road runs through the site connecting from Hillsborough Road and Ravernet Road junction with the Culcavy Road and the main entrance to the Maze Long Kesh site.
51. There are a number of detached residential properties distributed throughout and adjacent to the site, a Masonic Hall and the Sprucefield Park and Ride facility. A pedestrian link adjacent to the motorway is part of a wider Sustrans cycle network. The remainder of the land is primarily rural in character and mainly in agricultural use for the gazing of livestock and production of crops.

52. In terms of the wider context, the land beyond the site and the River Lagan to the north is within the settlement limit of Lisburn and mainly in employment use with a mixture of light industrial and storage and distribution uses. There is residential development at Knockmore and Lisburn to the north and northeast, a cemetery and residential development at Blaris to the east and agricultural land to the west.

Proposed Development

53. The outline application seeks to establish the principle for a proposed mixed use development comprised of new housing (1300 dwellings) and commercial floor space (754,000 square feet), 1.6km of road linking the M1 to the Knockmore Road at the junction with the Moira Road, a riverside parkland and associated ancillary site works.
54. The main characteristics of the proposed development are reflected in the concept master plan as follows:
- A new residential neighbourhood of with a maximum of 1300 dwellings incorporating a mix of house types;
 - Neighbourhood facilities including local food retail, leisure services, offices, community and other local non-residential uses;
 - New business uses up to a maximum floor area of 754,000 square feet that will accommodated B1a, B1b, B1c and B2 employment/business uses and appropriate sui generis uses;
 - A hotel and restaurant;
 - A retained and substantially expanded Park and Ride site; and
 - A range of open spaces including a new River Park incorporating cycle/walkways, local parks and green corridors to integrate with proposed housing north of Blaris Road.
55. There is an associated full application for the construction of a new road (1.6 km) connecting the existing M1/A101 roundabout to the Moira at the junction with the Knockmore Road (LA05/2018/1155/F).
56. The two planning applications are assessed in parallel as the new road is included in the description of both applications and the road is required to enable the development of the lands identified in the outline application.
57. The revised design and access statement dated October 2020 provides further detail in respect of a sustainability assessment, character assessment, landscape assessment and site evaluation assessment.
58. It also provides commentary on the evolution of the design process, design principles underpinning the proposed mixed use development, access considerations, phasing of the development and the benefits that result from the delivery of the proposed development.

Relevant Planning History

59. The relevant planning history associated with the application site and adjacent lands includes the following:

Application Reference	Description of Proposal	Decision
S/1998/0618	Comprehensive mixed development (to include retail food-store, retail warehousing, commercial leisure, vehicle showrooms and associated uses) together with Link Rd between A1 and M1, associated junctions, civil engineering and landscape works at Land at Sprucefield, bounded by and including A1 and M1 motorway.	Planning Permission Granted 22 March 2001
S/1999/1433/O	Construction of roundabout, underpass and slip roads on land directly north and south of M1 motorway Sprucefield Lisburn	Withdrawn
S/2001/1584/RM	Construction of link road between A1 and M1, slip roads and Dumbbell Roundabout, new roundabout on A1, associated improvements to sprucefield junction, civil engineering and ancillary works on Land at Sprucefield, Lisburn, bounded by the A1 Hillsborough Road and the M1 motorway	Planning Permission Granted 17 July 2002
S/2006/0443/O	Major mixed use urban extension to include: Business park, residential neighbourhood, retail, commercial and leisure uses, car showrooms, hotel and riverside restaurant & bar, primary school, community and social facilities, open space and landscaping, M1 Knockmore link road, and ancillary infrastructure.	Application withdrawn 05 June 2008
LA05/2018/1016/F	The development is for an asphalt surfaced car park, which shall be an extension to the existing DfI park and ride site. The extension shall provide 132 additional car parking spaces. The scheme shall include new concrete kerbs and timber fencing. Additional street lighting shall be provided for the extension on lands north of junction 8 of the M1, including lands to the north and south of Blaris Road, lands west of Priests Lane and south of Moira Road/ Knockmore Road junction, Lisburn.	Planning Permission Granted 05 March 2019

60. Attention is drawn to the supporting planning statement dated October 2019 which provides commentary on the planning history and related negotiations that took place with former DoE Planning Service in April 2006 and beyond in an attempt to secure the mixed use development of the Blaris lands.

61. The statement advises at paragraph 2.13 that the outline planning application was withdrawn at the request of the Department to allow focus on agreeing a Development Framework for the wider Blaris lands.
62. The statement alludes to an agreement in principle to the mixed use development at Blaris as part of evidence to BMAP Inquiry sessions held in December 2007 and January 2008.
63. It also advises that a Development Framework for Blaris was subsequently agreed and formally signed off by the Department in 2010.
64. That said, the Department did not adjust draft BMAP at the adoption stage to reflect the earlier negotiations and the mixed use proposal was not supported by the Commission in the report which followed the Public Inquiry. This is discussed in more detail later in the report.

Planning Policy Context

65. The relevant planning policy for both applications is found in the following documents:
 - Regional Development Strategy (RDS) 2035
 - Lisburn Area Plan 2001
 - Draft Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan (BMAP) 2015;
 - Strategic Planning Policy Statement for Northern Ireland (SPPS) - Planning for Sustainable Development
 - Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 2 - Natural Heritage
 - Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 3 - Access, Movement and Parking
 - Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 4 – Planning Economic Development
 - Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 7 - Quality Residential Environments
 - Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 8 - Open Space, Sport and Outdoor Recreation
 - Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 12 - Housing in Settlements
 - Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 15 – Planning and Flood Risk
 - Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 16 – Tourism
 - Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 21- Sustainable Development in the Countryside
66. The following guidance and non-statutory documents are also relevant to the assessment of the application:
 - Creating Places: Achieving quality in residential environments
 - Planning Advice Note on the Implementation of Planning Policy for the Retention of Zoned Land and Economic Development Uses
 - West Lisburn Development Framework

Consultations

67. The following consultations were carried out:

Consultee	Response
Council's Environmental Health	No Objection
Council's Economic Development Unit	No Objection
Historic Environment Division	No Objection
DAERA – Water Management Unit	No Objection
DAERA – Land, Soil and Air	No Objection
DAERA – Natural Heritage	No Objection
NI Water	No Objection
Shared Environmental Services	No Objection
DfI Roads	No Objection
DfI Rivers	No Objection
Northern Ireland Housing Executive	Advice

68. Members are advised that in a letter dated 14 January 2019 DfI Planning served a direction on the Council under the powers conferred on it by Articles 17 and 18 of the Planning (General Development Procedure) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015.

69. The direction prevents the Council from concluding the application process until the Department has an opportunity to assess whether the applications be referred to the Department for determination.

Representations

70. Two letters of objection have been submitted in respect of the proposal. The following issues have been raised:

- Noise Pollution
- Need for Good Design

- Employment buildings close to boundary of adjacent properties
- Negative Impact on Character of the Area
- Impact of Traffic on road network
- Impact on wildlife
- Potential for flooding
- Threat of Judicial Review

71. These issues have been addressed within the relevant policy sections below.
72. A letter of support recognises the benefits associated with the link road development in reducing pressures on the existing road network.
73. The wider economic benefits associated with the delivery of this link road including the economic benefits that will be unlocked or enabled as a result of its construction carry significant weight in the assessment of this application.

Planning Policy Context/Other Material Considerations

74. The main issues for to consider as part of the assessment of this application are:

- Environmental Impact Assessment
- Pre-Application Community Consultation
- Design and Access Statement
- Regional Strategic Direction
- Local Development Plan Context
- Principle of Development
 - Town Centre Uses
 - Sustainable Development in the Countryside
- Economic Development
- Other Material Considerations
 - Economic Benefits
 - Phasing
- Access, Movement and Parking
 - Creating an Accessible Environment
 - Access to Public Roads
 - Transport Assessment
 - Environmental Information - Transport
- Natural Heritage Interests
 - European and Ramsar Sites – International
 - Species protected by Law
 - Environmental Information – Ecology
- Archaeology and Built Heritage
 - Protection of Archaeological remains of local importance and their settings
 - Archaeological Assessment and Evaluation
 - Archaeological Mitigation
 - Environmental Information - Cultural

- Open Space, Sport and Outdoor Recreation
- Housing in Settlement
- Planning and Flood Risk
 - Development in Fluvial (River) and Coastal Flood Plains
 - Protection of Flood Defence and Drainage Infrastructure
 - Development and Surface Water Flood Risk Outside Flood Plains
 - Artificial modification of watercourses
 - Development in Proximity to Reservoirs
 - Environmental Information – Hydrology and Drainage
- Tourism
- Noise and Vibration
- Air Quality and Climate
- Contaminated Land

75. The following documents are provided in support of the mixed use application

- An Environmental Statement dated October 2018 and Addendum Statement dated November 2020;
- Supporting Planning Statement dated October 2018 and revised planning supporting statement dated October 2019;
- Design and Access Statement dated October 2018 and revised Design and Access Statement dated October 2020;
- Pre-Application Community Consultation (PACC) Report dated October 2018;
- Clarification in respect of Natural Heritage matters;
- Economic Benefits Statement dated October 2019; and
- Clarification Note (Flood Risk & Drainage Assessment) dated October 2020.

Environmental Impact Assessment

76. The application proposes mixed use development to include new housing (1300 dwellings) and commercial floor space (754,000 square feet) 1.6km M1-Knockmore link road, riverside parkland and ancillary works.
77. The proposal development would fall within Category 10 (f) - urban development projects of Schedule 2 of the Planning 'Environmental Impact Assessment' (EIA) Regulations (NI) 2017.
78. Under this category, an EIA is required for the carrying out of development to provide urban development projects where the area of the development

exceeds 1 hectares. In this case application site is approximately 112 hectares.

79. An Environment Statement dated October 2018 is submitted in support of the application. The statement deals with the likely environmental effects that the proposed link road infrastructure may give rise to and the significance of any effects on:
- Population
 - Transportation
 - Noise and Vibration
 - Air Quality
 - Ecology
 - Soils, Water and Contaminated Land
 - Hydrology and Drainage
 - Landscape and Visual
 - Cultural Heritage
80. These matters are addressed against the respective planning policy sections set out in the main body of this report.

Pre-Application Community Consultation

81. In accordance with legislative requirements, the application was accompanied by a Pre-Application Community Consultation Report. Issues raised through the consultation event process are summarised as follows:
- Masterplan Vs Proposed Application
 - Timescale for Development
 - Link Road Delivery
 - Implications for Knockmore Road/Other Junctions
 - Knockmore Ballinderry Road Junction
 - Knockmore Road/Prince William Road Junction
 - Ballymacash Road/Prince William Road Junction
 - M1 Traffic
 - Traffic Management
 - Social Housing
 - School Provision
 - Separation Distance to Proposed Housing
 - Alternative of MLK site
 - Movement Patters
 - Flooding
 - Masonic Hall
 - Neighbourhood Facilities
82. The PACC advises at paragraph 66 that feedback from the first public information sessions in 2017 allowed for a further review of the concept master plan to be carried out and for a response to be provided in relation to the following site specific can broader land use comments:

- Reviewing access into the mixed use zonings east and west of the link road at its Moira Road/Knockmore Road junction;
- Reviewing the location and extent of the Park and Ride onsite which is now proposed to be expanded at its existing location at the M1 frontage;
- Reviewing the developable potential of residential lands to the east of the application red line boundary at the northern end of Priests Land to reflect the floodplain and a more appropriate extent of green corridor linking to River Park; and
- Reviewing the proposed locations of SuDS ponds and relationships with existing Masonic Hall.

Regional Development Strategy

83. The Revised Regional Development Strategy (RDS) 2035 was published in 2010. It is the spatial strategy of the Stormont Executive and it seeks to deliver the spatial aspects of the Programme for Government (PfG) whilst providing a strategic context for where development should happen.
84. Regional Strategy promotes the need for strong and vibrant cities driving much of the economic growth. It also places a focus on larger urban centres and regional gateways to take advantage of their locations on the regional transport network whilst confirming the importance of having strong and vibrant cities to ensure that the wider region is successful.
85. Policy RG1 of the RDS requires there to be an adequate and available supply of employment lands to ensure sustainable economic growth. This policy requires the protection of land zoned for economic use as it provides a valuable resource for local and external investment.
86. Policy RG2 requires a balanced approach to the delivery of transport infrastructure that improves connectivity. It states that the capacity of road space can be increased by moving people in a more efficient way and by providing more attractive transport choices. This will improve access to our cities, towns and rural areas.
87. Policy RG7 supports urban and rural renaissance. It is stated that many places do not offer the quality of facilities required to meet the needs of local people. Urban renaissance is the process of development and redevelopment in urban areas to attract investment and activity, foster revitalisation and improve the mix of uses. Development is dependent upon the availability of necessary infrastructure, including water and sewerage infrastructure but should avoid, where possible, areas that are at risk of flooding from rivers, the sea or surface water run-off.

88. SFG1 promotes urban economic development at key locations throughout the BMUA and ensure sufficient land is available for jobs. The spatial framework also identifies the enhancement of Lisburn City as a major employment and commercial centre. Lisburn is strategically located at the meeting of key transport corridors and has high development potential and the scope to generate additional jobs. West Lisburn (Blaris) is identified as one of the key locations in the BMUA for employment growth.
89. The general thrust of the RDS and in particular the requirement of policy RG1 is weighed against the other material considerations outlined in this report as part of the decision making process.

Local Development Plan

90. Section 6(4) of the Planning Act (NI) 2011 requires that in making a determination on planning applications regard must be had to the requirements of the local development plan and that determination of applications must be in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
91. On 18 May 2017, the Court of Appeal ruled that the purportedly adopted Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan (BMAP) 2015 had in its entirety not been lawfully adopted.
92. As a consequence of this decision, the Lisburn Area Plan (LAP) 2001 is the statutory development plan for the area, however, draft BMAP remains a material consideration.
93. The LAP identifies the application site as being outside the settlement limit of Lisburn and in the open countryside.
94. Draft BMAP identifies the line of a road running from junction 8 of the M1 to the Moira Road at the junction with Knockmore Road as the settlement limit of Lisburn. The land on the inside of the road line (designation LC17/01) is zoned as an area for major employment (designation LC 07).
95. The land within the red line boundary to the west of this road line lies outside this designated employment zoning and within the open countryside.
96. The following Key Site Requirements (KSR) as summarised below are stipulated in the draft Plan within defines zones in which the proposed range of uses would be acceptable:
 - Light Industrial Uses
 - General Industrial Uses
 - Storage or Distribution Uses
 - Special Industrial Uses
 - Business Use (total floor space specified)
 - Hotel

- Educational Use
 - Healthcare Facilities
 - Car Showrooms
97. An area to the north of the site lies within an area designated within the draft plan as an area of open space defined by designation LC37 for informal recreation/amenity open space as part of the overall West Lisburn employment zoning LC 07.
 98. The lands to the North fall within lands associated with a Landscape Policy Area designation LC21.
 99. The features or combination of features that contribute to the environmental quality, integrity or character of this area include an area of local nature conservation interest which is a river landscape pertaining to the River Lagan with deciduous tree groups linking Long Kesh/Lower Broomhedge/Lurganure LLPA (designation LH 02) and Lagan Valley Regional Park.
 100. An area to the north of the site lies within an area designated within the draft plan as an area of open space defined by designation LC 36 for informal recreation/amenity open space as part of the overall West Lisburn employment zoning LC 05 akin to the draft plan designation.
 101. In a recent publication the Chief Planner for Northern Ireland advised that for those planning authorities subject to draft BMAP, that the draft plan along with representations received to the draft plan and the PAC inquiry report **remains a material consideration** to be weighed by the decision-maker.
 102. The agent for the application expresses the view at paragraph 5.7 of the planning supporting statement dated October 2019 that the draft Plan failed to recognise the natural constraint to the development provided by the River Lagan floodplain in restricting the development limit.
 103. Comment is also provided at paragraph 5.8 that it (the draft Plan) did not anticipate the need for further infrastructural linkage to the west of this road to connect to the regionally important Maze Long Kesh site.
 104. The view is also expressed by the agent for the application that the PAC Inquiry into the objections made to draft Zoning LC07 changed at the Public Inquiry into draft BMAP and that it (the Department) agreed with the objectors that the zoning should be for mixed use, comprising equal portions of employment and residential development.
 105. The Commission expressed the view however in their consideration of the mixed use proposal that the site was one of two crucial zonings for new employment land on the periphery of the Metropolitan Area as expressed at SFG1 of the RDS.
 106. The Inquiry report recognised that the proposed M1 – Knockmore link road would provide direct access to the strategic highway network. The view was

expressed that such prime locations were rare in contrast to the wider range of available housing land.

107. The Inquiry report stated that the Department did not justify why its opinion changed in respect of the requirement for employment lands at this strategic location.
108. The Commission report concluded that the strategic direction for housing growth refers to Lisburn City generally and not just West Lisburn and certainly not the Blaris area.
109. The view expressed in the Inquiry report was that this area was far from ideal for housing purposes in view of its relatively isolated location from other housing and the fact that it is surrounded by major employment uses, retail development and roads infrastructure.
110. It also acknowledged arguments advanced that housing would contribute to the funding of the M1-Knockmore link road and whilst its importance was recognised, the view was expressed that employment zonings should also contribute equally to such a road as they are major traffic generators and would benefit equally from the road.
111. The Inquiry report concluded that no part of this zoning or any additional lands around the zoning should be allocated for housing. The applicant provides evidence in support of the application which seeks to address a perceived market failure in that the absence of any sustained market interest in the land for employment only (given the cost of the provision of the required infrastructure in advance of the development of the land) means that the conclusions of the Commission following the Public Inquiry need to be reconsidered.
112. The application for the mixed use development is contrary to the extant local development plan and draft plan designation in that it proposes housing on land designated for employment/industry as a major employment location and outside the proposed settlement limit of Lisburn.
113. The applicant suggests that the previous agreement of a framework should be weighed as a significant material consideration in the assessment of this application. This argument is not accepted as significant time has passed and the evidence pre-dates the public inquiry report into draft BMAP.
114. The Department of Environment Planning will have kept records of the discussions but the key finding in the Inquiry Report was that the Department had provided insufficient evidence to explain its rationale for departing from the zoning in the draft Plan.
115. It can only be assumed that on reflection and having had regard to the comments made by the Commission specific to the amount of land zoned for

housing in Lisburn and the need to retain the strategic employment interest the Department changed its mind.

116. No legal challenge was pursued by the objectors bringing forward the mixed use development proposal of West Lisburn following the adoption (albeit unlawful) of BMAP. This would have been the proper mechanism to have tested the conflicting positions of the Department.
117. That said, BMAP is still not adopted and the question still continues to be asked as to whether an employment zoning can be sustained at West Lisburn. It is accepted that the rationale offered by the Commission for protecting the land for employment was valid at the time.
118. The findings of the Inquiry report are however almost ten years old and the potential of the land has not been realised. There is no evidence available in line with the advice detailed in the Inquiry report to conclude that other large housing schemes contributed or were required to contribute to the funding of the Knockmore Link Road.
119. The latest revision of the RDS retains West Lisburn as a location for major employment important to Northern Ireland as a region. The infrastructure necessary to unlock the potential of the land is not supported in a Plan and the Knockmore Link Road is still regarded by the Department as a developer led road scheme.
120. There is an obvious tension between the ambition for West Lisburn as set out in the RDS and the direction offered in the draft Plan as to how this ambition might be realised.
121. The weight to be afforded to the extant and emerging draft plan must be considered against the other material considerations that are presented now and that take account of the passage of time.
122. The West Lisburn Development Framework (WLDF) (last reviewed in 2018) for example was commissioned by the Council in response to the lack of private sector interest in developing West Lisburn for employment. It set out a rationale for mixed use development for realising the true economic potential of this strategic zoning. The significance of the WLDF is considered later in this report.

Principle of Development

123. The Strategic Planning Policy Statement (SPPS) published in September 2015 states that until the Council adopts the Plan Strategy for its new Local Development Plan there will be a transitional period in operation.

124. During this period, planning policy within existing retained documents and guidance will apply. Any conflict between the SPPS and policy retained under transitional arrangements must be resolved in favour of the provisions of the SPPS.
125. The SPPS states that planning authorities should be guided by the principle that sustainable development should be permitted, having regard to the local development plan and all other material considerations, unless the proposed development will cause demonstrable harm to interests of acknowledged importance.
126. The SPPS recognises that a key dimension of sustainable development for Northern Ireland is economic growth and that planning authorities should therefore take a positive approach to appropriate economic development proposals, and proactively support and enable growth generating activities.
127. Paragraph 6.89 states that it is important that economic development land and buildings which are well located and suited to such purposes are retained so as to ensure a sufficient ongoing supply.
128. It also advises that planning permission should not normally be granted for proposals that would result in the loss of land zoned for economic development uses and that Councils may wish to retain flexibility to consider alternative proposals that offer community, environmental or other benefits that are considered to outweigh the loss of land for economic development uses.
129. In terms of Town Centre Uses, paragraph 9.280 of the SPPS states that a sequential tests should be applied to planning applications for main town centres uses that are not in an existing centre and are not in accordance an up to date LDP.
130. Within this context, the community facilities, retail, leisure and business offers associated with the mixed use scheme are consistent with the key site requirements stipulated in the LDP and as such, the need for a sequential test is not considered to be necessary.
131. With regard to housing, the SPPS states that the policy approach must be to facilitate and promote more sustainable housing development within existing urban area and the provision of mixed housing development with homes in a range of sizes and tenures.
132. It also states that good design identifies and makes positive uses of the assets of a site and the characteristics of its surroundings to determine the most appropriate form of development.
133. Strategic policy states that the key to successful place-making is the relationship between different buildings, the relationship between buildings and streets etc. and that the compatibility of a development with its immediate and

wider context, and the settlement pattern of a particular area are important considerations.

134. Having considered the content of the SPPS against the retained policies set out in PPS 4: Economic Development, PPS 7: Quality Residential Environments, and PPS3: Access, Movement and Parking, (in so far as these relate to the principle of developing this land) no distinguishable differences are found that should be reconciled in favour of the SPPS. The application therefore falls to be assessed against prevailing regional policy tests found in this suite of documents.
135. Part of the proposed road remains in the open countryside and the requirements of policy CTY 1 of PPS21 apply to this part of the development.
136. Approximately 200 residential units are proposed and employment land comprising approximately 100,000 square feet of commercial employment floor space.
137. Residential development is not normally acceptable in the open countryside. It is further stated in the policy that:

‘There are a range of other types of non-residential development that may be acceptable in principle in the countryside, e.g. certain utilities or telecommunications development. Proposals for such development will continue to be considered in accordance with existing published planning policies.
138. The part of the road that is in the open countryside is assessed having regard to the requirements of PPS 3 as necessary infrastructure. The need to locate the housing and non-residential employment use in the open countryside are justified on the basis that the floodplain of the River Lagan is a more logical edge to the settlement.
139. The fact that the floodplain provides a natural limit to the settlement and might be a more logical limit to Lisburn this is not sufficient justification in its own right to justify development in the floodplain.
140. Rather than treat this part of the development as a separate matter the need to develop all the land comprehensively is addressed as part of the assessment of the policy and other material considerations and the siting of new buildings in the open countryside considered in the planning balance.
141. The proposal either fails to meet policy or is treated as an exception because the other material considerations are considered so significant that this outweighs the policy objections for locating new development in the open countryside.
142. This should not be considered to create precedence for development in the open countryside in general as this is considered to be a strategic location and

the general ambition to secure the orderly and proper development is not directly transferable to other sites.

Economic Development

143. As indicated above, the RDS promotes the need for strong and vibrant cities driving much of the economic growth. It also requires there to be an adequate and available supply of employment lands to ensure sustainable economic growth.
144. Paragraph 4.18 of the SPPS recognises that a modern, efficient and effective planning system is essential to supporting wider government policy, in its efforts to promote long term economic growth.
145. Strategic policy directs that planning authorities should take a positive approach to appropriate economic development proposals, and proactively support and enable growth generating activities.
146. PPS 4 – Planning and Economic Development sets out the planning policies for economic development uses and indicates how growth associated with such uses can be accommodated and promoted in development plans.
147. Policy PED 7 – Retention of Zoned Land and Economic Development Uses states that development that would result in the loss of land or buildings zoned for economic development uses in a development plan (either existing areas or new allocations) to other uses will not be permitted, unless zoned land has been substantially developed for alternative uses. The application site remains undeveloped at the time of writing this report.
148. Paragraph 3 of the Departments Planning Advice Note on the Implementation of Planning Policy for the Retention of Zoned Land and Economic Development Uses states that the advice note is an amplification of existing planning policy and supplementary guidance.
149. It emphasises that it does not add to or change existing policy or guidance that is considered appropriate for assessing applications for economic development proposals.
150. The application proposes a mixed use development and the detail indicates that approximately 65% of the application site will be lost to non-economic development uses. The application site also accounts for approximately 50% of the entire land use zoning with an additional 18 hectares provided outside the boundary of the employment designation set out in draft BMAP and in the open countryside.
151. The application insofar as it comprises a residential element, is not consistent with the regional strategic direction offered in the RDS and contrary to the general policy thrust set out in the SPPS and policy PED7 of PPS4 in that it will result in the loss of land zoned for economic development uses.

152. The agent describes a negotiation between a developer and the former planning authority which in their opinion provides a framework for agreement that must be considered in the planning balance.
153. This negotiation was in a time of change when the legislation was amended, the RDS was under review and regional policy was being updated to facilitate the transition of responsibility for planning to local government.
154. In light of this little or material weight is afforded to the narrative describing the planning history for the reasons set out earlier in this report.
155. That said in the absence of continued interest in the land it is considered that significant material weight is given to the updated evidence which describes the economic benefits that might be accrued from bringing forward mixed use development on the land linked to the delivery of the Knockmore Link road and which must be considered in the context of **no** jobs (my emphasis) having been created in the previous ten years.
156. Whilst the WLDF is a non-statutory document, it is material to the decision making process. In an analysis undertaken by Oxford Economics on behalf of the Council and used to inform the preparation of the framework it was indicated that the mixed use development of this land could generate 3,500 employment-class jobs.
157. In addition, Oxford Economics forecasted that the additional spending by new residents will generate 1,300 jobs across the Council area together with a further 1,600 indirect and induced jobs.
158. Whilst many of these jobs will only follow occupation of the new homes, this analysis does point to the significant economic contribution of this scale of development. It also reduces any argument regarding the need for all of the site to be zoned for employment purposes.
159. That said it is also accepted there is no direct alignment between the geographical extent of the study area for the WLDF and this planning application.
160. The ability to secure the level of employment suggested in the Oxford Economics analysis is predicated on at least 50% of the Blaris lands (as identified in draft BMAP) being available for employment use.
161. As stated above approximately 65% of the application site is for uses other than employment. The challenge for the Council in permitting the loss of this amount of land is whether it will assist in the future in realising the full employment potential of the balance of the land by putting in place the necessary road infrastructure.

162. Approximately 50% of the total employment zoning as envisaged in draft BMAP will remain available (excluding the land in the open countryside beyond) to realise the number of jobs projected in the Oxford Economics analysis.
163. The planning applicant has assembled the necessary land to construct the Knockmore Link Road, brought forward a detailed design for the road in a parallel application and a phasing plan that indicates the road will be constructed in parallel with some of the mixed use development as a first phase of development.
164. This is a significant material consideration in realising the full potential of West Lisburn as a strategic location for employment. However it is equally important not to undermine further the RDS policy direction in respect of West Lisburn.
165. The concept plan submitted shows how the proposed housing north of the Blaris Road might be extended into the neighbouring lands. The concept only relates to the application site and is without prejudice to what might come forward on the balance of the lands.
166. The developer chose not to bring forward a framework for all the West Lisburn (Blaris) zoning and has asked for this proposal to be considered on its own merits.
167. It is considered that the balance of the land could still be developed for employment with suitable mitigation in the form of a buffer which provides clear segregation between the neighbouring uses. The housing in the application site is supported by all the necessary transport infrastructure, neighbour facilities and open spaces.
168. It could be regarded that the scheme as proposed is an 'urban village' sitting next to an area of major employment where there is ease of access to future employment opportunity without the need to commute long distances.
169. The concept does **not** prejudice the future development of the West Lisburn (Blaris) land for employment.

Other Material Considerations

170. As indicated above, Section 6(4) of the Planning Act (NI) 2011 requires that in making a determination on planning applications, regard must be had to the requirements of the local development plan and that determination of applications must be in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
171. In the supporting documentation provided with the application namely the Supporting Planning Statement dated October 2019 and an Economic Benefits Statement dated October 2019, the agent advances a number of other material considerations to be weighed as part of the decision making process.

Economic Benefits

172. The Supporting Planning Statement indicates that the development will promote social inclusivity through enhanced accessibility to future job creation; it will deliver substantial economic benefit in terms of investment, job creation and wider benefit to the local and regional economy; and it will providing a catalyst to unlock major economic growth whilst achieving a highly compact urban form.
173. An Economic Benefit Statement prepared by Barton Willmore expresses the view that the proposed development clearly and positively aligns with the long terms vision and aims of the Regional Development Strategy whereby the regional strategy seeks to ensure that there is a supply of land to facilitate sustainable economic growth.
174. Paragraph 1.9 of the Economic Benefit statement, advises that the M1-Knockmore Link Road is expected to cost in the region of £12 million and that it is to be delivered within two years of construction works commencing. The view is expressed that it will employ 76 full time equivalent (FTE) construction workers and contribute £4.1 million gross value added (GVA) to regional economic output.
175. Paragraph 1.10 has regard to the number of construction businesses based in Lisburn and estimates that about 46 full FTE (indirect jobs) will be supported by supply chain opportunities created during the construction phase. The view is expressed that this equates to a contribution of £2.7 million GVA to regional economic output.
176. The Knockmore link road, will open up access to substantial development opportunities at Blaris lands and the Maze Strategic Land Reserve of Regional Importance. Paragraph 1.11 advises that an analysis carried out on behalf of the Council (understood to be the evidence included in the WLDF) estimates that across the Maze Lands, Blaris Lands and Knockmore Industrial Estate, between 4,800 – 9,000 jobs will be created and sustained over the next 20 years (this evidence was based on the 2105 framework).
177. The statement advises at paragraph 1.12 that the development of the employment floor space, the mixed use space and the 1,300 new homes will commence immediately on completion of the link road and that this work will bring significant regional economic benefits including 205 direct and 125 indirect jobs supported over the construction period, contributing to £193 million economic output in total.
178. The development of the employment and mixed use spaces is expected to support 1,178 new jobs, producing economic output valued at £42 million GVA and generating £0.9 million in business rate receipts annually.
179. The development of 1,300 new homes can be expected to accommodate 3,280 residents of which about 1,520 are likely to be employed, contributing £60

million GVA to regional economic output, giving rise to £29 million household expenditure and generating £1.4 million domestic rate receipts annually.

180. Securing the delivery of a new business campus of some 754,000 square feet (approximately 70,000 square metres) of floor space of which 618,000 square feet (approximately 57,500 square metres) are B1a, B1b, B2c and B2 employment/business uses and appropriate sui generis uses contributes significantly to the local job targets for the Council area.
181. Advice has been sought from the Economic Development Unit of the Council and the methodology against which GVA is calculated is challenged and there is a comment that the economic benefits are likely to be over-estimated. The weight to be afforded to the monetary contribution that this proposal makes to the local economy is treated with caution and not attached significant weight.
182. In general terms however it is accepted by the Economic Development Unit that:
 - the development of West Lisburn (Blaris) and the wider land is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for the council area and surrounding region, and the council would argue that the nature of the proposed commercial investment ought to offer foreign direct investment and indigenous growth opportunities in key growth sectors that provide higher GVA levels and higher-value jobs, that reflect the council's ambitions for the future of the local economy.
 - beyond the economic impact described in the analysis, it is worth noting that the location of new and additional employment opportunities of scale at West Lisburn (Blaris), has the potential to generate a positive local environmental dividend in Lisburn by reducing the need for individuals to commute outside the council area for employment.
 - the proximity of the site to North and West Belfast (two areas of high unemployment), and the enhanced connectivity proposed by the Knockmore M1 Link Road to the motorway network and the Knockmore Rail Halt to the railway network, means that the employment generated at West Lisburn (Blaris) has the potential to provide positive economic impact not just in Lisburn Castlereagh, but in the wider region and beyond.
 - there is no doubt that the construction of the Knockmore Link Road is key to unlocking the economic development potential of West Lisburn (Blaris).
183. The Economic Development Unit accept given the history of market failure in delivering the Road at the site this proposal is welcomed on balance.
184. However a clear strategy as to how the West Lisburn (Blaris) site is required looking forward as to how higher value added commercial land use is secured on this and neighbouring land, that would complement, for example, the RUAS

agri-food, agri-tech ambitions for Maze Long Kesh, the digital agenda espoused by Belfast Region City Deal or the UK Industrial Strategy.

Recent expressions of the Councils long term vision for Blaris lands

185. Paragraph 2.21 of the Economic Benefit Statement notes that the Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council Local Development Plan (LDP) Preferred Options Paper refers to West Lisburn as an important strategic location at the confluence of the main north-south and east-west transport corridors.
186. Paragraph 2.23 notes that Strategic Objective B within the LDP document puts forward Preferred Option A which discusses the re-designation of the Blaris Major Employment Zoning to a mixed use site.
187. The view is expressed that the LDP re-designation would involve 50% of the zoning being allocated for housing and that this key strategic site offers the most suitable opportunity for further expansion of housing growth over and above what is currently contained on committed and zoned housing sites.
188. Paragraph 2.25 states that the West Lisburn Development Framework (WLDF) expects the proposed development at Blaris and it's enabling of the Knockmore M1 Link Road to have a profound effect on the sub-region facilitating growth to other important sites including Sprucefield Regional Shopping Centre, Maze Long Kesh and Knockmore and Lissue Industrial Estates.
189. The view is expressed at paragraph 2.31 of the Economic Benefits Statement that the improved connectivity created by the Knockmore Link road will act as an attractor to potential foreign investors and/or new employments sectors in the area.
190. Many of these points are dealt with in the preceding paragraphs. However the strategic economic benefits of the proposed link road as a result of it construction carry significant weight in the assessment of this application. The road gives the Knockmore Hill, Lissue and Ballinderry Road Industrial Estates direct access to the strategic road network.
191. The significance of the proposal in terms of unlocking the potential of the strategic land reserve at the Maze Long Kesh is also recognised.
192. The continued development of land at the Maze amongst other things as a major centre for tourism in terms of operation of the Eikon exhibition centre by the RUAS and the operation of the aviation museum by the Ulster Aviation Society are constrained by the absence of a link to the strategic road network.
193. This is necessary infrastructure and the road as designed allows for this link to be realised in the future and provides impetus for a master plan to come forward for the balance of the land reserve at the Maze.

Proposed Phasing

194. The Design and Access Statement dated October 2020 provides detail at section 26.0 of indicative phasing and delivery.
195. The intention to deliver the link road in one contract at the outset is clearly documented at paragraph 26.1.
196. The view is expressed that the extended Park & Ride facility could be delivered independently of any other development parcel but it is expected to be delivered during the construction of the link road.
197. Employment phases 1 – 4 are all accessible from the link road and could be delivered independently of another other development parcel/phase. The statement advises that these phases are expected to be demand driven and determined by the market.
198. Construction of the first phase of approximately 275 homes is proposed to be built in parallel with the construction of the link road.
199. The statement advises that the Neighbourhood Centre and Northern Gateway are likely to come forward during residential phase 3 – 4.
200. The detail of the proposed phasing requires to be considered as part of the decision making process with its delivery to be secured through a Section 76 planning agreement.
201. At paragraph 21, the Planning Advice Note lists a number of other planning considerations which may be pertinent when making balanced judgements on the merits of a particular case of the potential loss of economic development.
202. Within this context, it is considered that significant weight is attached to the delivery of the link road at the outset in recognition of the wider economic benefits that will be accrued in that it will open up access to enable the development of the wider Blaris lands for major economic growth through sustainable mixed use development of this site, with enhancements to transport capacity across the local road network including access to key public transport proposals such as the Knockmore rail halt, and by facilitating connection to the Maze Long Kesh strategic land reserve.
 - The views expressed by all other interested parties during the public consultation process including those of local enterprise and business representatives
203. The Pre Application Community Consultation report outlines the various issues raised by interested parties during the public event facilitated by the applicant prior to the applications being submitted.

204. Commentary is provided in this report to demonstrate how the issues raised have been taken into account.
205. In terms of the planning application process itself, the level of representation received in opposition to the applications is extremely low.
206. Consideration of the issues raised by third parties as part of the public consultation process are set out in the report above with all being addressed through the environmental statement and other supporting information.
- Accessibility to the regional transportation network and a variety of transport modes;
207. The Planning Supporting Statement dated October 2019 provides detail at paragraph 5.30 of a range of wider benefits to transportation networks as a result of the proposed development.
208. The view is expressed that the development will deliver a balanced approach to transport infrastructure to include improving connectivity, enhancing public transport infrastructure including multi modal facility and park and ride sites to encourage motorists to take the bus or train for the main part of their journey.
209. The statement also explains that the approach to be adopted also includes improvements to freight management and accessibility from established employment areas to the strategic movement corridors of the M1/A1 and notable relief to the city centre and its surrounding road network.
210. Paragraph 5.39 also makes reference to transportation connectivity in and around Lisburn being vastly enhanced.
211. Evidence submitted with mixed use and associated link road application demonstrates that the proposed development has been designed to encourage sustainable modes of transport and that public transport facilities, that the use of public transport will be promoted and implemented through Translink incentives and that it will significantly improve traffic progression through Lisburn City Centre, provide a direct link to the strategic road network for the west of Lisburn and in doing so, create the opportunity for orbital bus services to connect to the existing radial services
- The potential to regenerate existing urban areas through economic development or as part of a mixed use development
212. Paragraph 5.39 of the Planning Supporting Statement also indicates that the proposed development will enable much improved movement of people and freight from the strategic transport corridors of the M1 and A1 through the introduction of the link road. Reference is also made in the statement to the M1-Knockmore link road unlocking the true potential of the nearby Maze Long Kesh.

213. As indicated above, both applications will open up access to enable the development of the wider Blaris lands for major economic growth through sustainable mixed use development of this site, with enhancements to transport capacity across the local road network including access to key public transport proposals such as the Knockmore rail halt, and by facilitating connection to the Maze Long Kesh strategic land reserve.
214. The wider economic benefits associated with the opportunities offered in this regard are given significant weight in the assessment of this application.
- Accessibility to every member of the community, especially those in socially disadvantaged areas
215. The Planning Supporting Statement dated October 2019 indicates that the development will promote social inclusivity through enhanced accessibility to future job creation which in turn, can assist in tackling problems of social deprivation.
216. The Knockmore Link road and orbital bus services will provide increased accessibility to employment opportunity socially disadvantaged communities in Lisburn City and beyond for the reasons expressed previously in this report.
217. It is considered that the detail provided in relation to the creation of a riverside park and green networks (including pedestrian and cycle links) also demonstrates that the proposed development will provide increased access to high quality parkland for leisure and contributes to the wellbeing of communities.
218. The provision of affordable housing as part of the overall housing mix offer is essential to attracting younger people to get a step on the housing ladder and sustain local employment in a Council area with an increasingly aging population structure.
- Why a site is no longer required or considered suitable for continued economic development use
219. The supporting statement dated October 2019 indicates at paragraph 5.46 that despite the lands having been identified for major employment use in draft BMAP, there has been no serious interest in that being realised over a 16 year period due to the need to plan, design and construct the M1 Knockmore link road.
220. The view is expressed that the draft BMAP aspiration of identifying a very large planned growth area solely for employment has not been attractive to the market as evidence by the fact that no development has occurred on the site.

221. As indicated above, the absence of continued interest in the land for employment use only is acknowledged. Within this context, it is considered that significant material weight is given to the updated evidence commissioned by the Council which describes the economic benefits that might be accrued from bringing forward mixed use development on the land linked to the delivery of the link road.

- Compatibility with neighbouring land uses

222. Paragraph 5.74 of the Planning Supporting Statement dated October 2019 indicates that the provision of homes and investment in communities to promote prosperity and enable access to employment goes hand in hand.

223. Within this context, it is considered that the potential does exist for a proposed mixed use scheme to be sensitively designed in order that the commercial, industrial and residential uses can co-exist without detriment.

- The views of relevant statutory and non-statutory consultees

224. Advice from statutory and non-statutory consultees is provided for against the relevant policy sections below. No objections are offered in respect of the proposed development.

225. The application has been accompanied by an environmental statement and the impacts of the proposed development is tested in this submission. Furthermore, the advice from statutory and non-statutory consultees is included the assessment below.

- The availability of adequate services and infrastructure such as water and sewerage

226. Advice from NI Water confirms that there is a public water supply and foul sewer within 20 metres of the proposed site. This demonstrates that the site is capable of being serviced adequately with mains water and sewerage infrastructure.

227. Detail submitted with the application demonstrates that the road network is able to accommodate the scale of development envisaged.

228. An updated response from NI Water dated 29 March 2021, confirms that a Water Network Capacity check has been completed and a solution for this proposed development has been identified.

229. With regard to foul discharge and based on the completion of an initial foul network capacity check report, the proposal is predicted to cause flooding detriment at a manhole downstream of the development connection point and surcharge detriment at 45 other manholes.

230. That said, and taking into account the timelines associated with subsequent design stages, the advice provided recommends the inclusion of a condition that requires the submission of details of the drainage proposals for the disposal and treatment of foul sewage discharge to be submitted and agreed in writing at reserved matters stage.

Natural Heritage

231. PPS 2 – Natural Heritage, sets out the planning policies for the conservation, protection and enhancement of our natural heritage.

232. Policy NH 2 – Species Protected by Law covers both European Protected Species and nationally protected species. Policy states that planning permission will only be granted for a development proposal that is not likely to harm a European protected species.

233. The planning supporting statement dated October 2019 advises at paragraph 5.140 that the ecological statement is based on a suite of filed surveys undertaken by Ecology Solutions in 2016 and 2017.

234. The statement advises that the surveys were refreshed again in October 2019 with confirmation provided that no material changes to type or condition of habitats within the application site since 2016.

235. Paragraph 5.143 of the supporting statement advises that there are no non-statutory designated sites within the application site and that the nearest non-statutory site is old warren SLNCI which lies immediately adjacent to the north east corner of the site and runs along the embankment of the River Lagan.

236. Adverse impacts identified are limited to potential increases in recreation pressure from the proposed mixed use development. No significant adverse impacts are identified and a mitigation strategy has been devised to mitigate against pressures that may arise.

237. In terms of surveys, the supporting statement advises at paragraph 5.145 that detailed surveys were undertaken in relation to protected species (bats, amphibians, breeding birds, badgers and otters).

238. The habitats within the application site to be affected by the development proposals are considered to be of limited ecological value. The supporting statement advises that there is no evidence to suggest that the proposed development would lead to a significant impact on any known protected species or ecological features of value.

239. Chapter 9 of the Environmental Statement addresses Natural Heritage Issues and concluded the habitats within the application site to be affected by the proposed development area considered to be of generally limited ecological value.

240. Chapter 7 of the Addendum Statement confirmed that a detailed ecological review is provided to take account of the amended Masterplan.
241. Updated habitat surveys undertaken in October 2019 confirm no material changes to type or condition of habitats since initial surveys.
242. Updated species surveys confirm that the suite of mitigation and enhancement measures proposed in the initial statement are still fully appropriate with no additional measures considered necessary.
243. A number of mitigation measures as summarised below are identified in Chapter 9 of the Environmental Statement:
- All works in close proximity to waterbodies within the application site will be undertaken with regard to industry best practice to avoid pollution, sediment and soil deposition entering Belfast Lough Designated Sites;
 - Use of standard engineering practices such as damping down techniques, use of wheel washes and appropriate stock piling of materials will effectively mitigate any potential adverse effects on natural heritage interests by virtue of dust contamination.
 - New native hedgerow and scrub planting will bolster the existing tree/hedgerow located at the boundary connecting the application site with the Old Warren SLNCI;
 - Use of interpretation boards will highlight footpaths available for public use thereby protecting existing habitats. Dog foul and litter bins will be installed at strategic locations along public footpaths;
 - Retained hedgerows and tress will be safeguarded during construction by the clear demarcation of appropriate root protection zones;
 - Proposed landscaping across the application site will compensate for the loss of scrub, hedgerows and trees. The open spaces and green corridors will provide a network of connectivity through the site and wider area;
 - Suitable drainage strategy to include the use of appropriate pipes, attenuation ponds and manholes will serve to mitigate for any significant changes in run-off to the open water habitats within the site;
 - Lighting strategies to be submitted at detailed design stage associated with wider site development will be designed to minimise lighting impacts of foraging and commuting bats;
 - New ponds will be provided to compensate the loss of a waterbody utilised by Smooth Newt;
 - Clearance of suitable bird breeding habitat to facilitate construction will take place outside of the bird nesting season; and
 - Precautionary checks for badgers and otters will be carried out when removing dense scrub habitat and prior to the construction of the new bridge.
244. With regard to advice received from the statutory consultees in relation to Natural Heritage matters, Shared Environmental Services confirmed in a response received on 7 May 2019 that the planning applications were considered on behalf of the Council in light of the assessment requirements of

Regulation 43 (1) of the Conservation (Natural Habitats, etc.) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1995 (as amended). There is no evidence to suggest that the assessment carried out on the Councils behalf is not acceptable.

245. Having considered the nature, scale, timing, duration and location of the project Shared Environmental Services concluded that the proposal will not have an adverse effect on the site integrity of any European site hydrologically connected to the proposal site subject to condition whereby a detailed final Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) shall be submitted for approval of the Council prior to commencement of construction.
246. Advice provided stated that this CEMP must include all the avoidance and mitigation methodologies in the outline CEMP and protection of the water environment consistent with advice from DAERAs Water Management Unit (WMU).
247. WMU in a response received on 15 January 2019 confirmed that they had considered the impacts of the proposal on the surface water environment and on the basis of the information provided is content with the proposal subject to a condition in respect of the submission of a detailed CEMP.
248. Natural Environment Division (NED) provided advice in relation to designated and protected sites, habitats and species in a response received on 15 January 2019.
249. Advice provided recommended consultation with Shared Environmental Services to enable a habitats Regulations Assessment on Natura 2002 sites to be undertaken.
250. The response expressed concern that the Environmental Statement did not provide all the necessary information to assess and mitigate the potential impact of the proposal on designated sites and other natural heritage interests.
251. The following additional information was requested:
 - (i) Clarification that surveys for badgers, bats, newts and otters were submitted to LCCC within one year of being carried out;
 - (ii) Clarification that surveys for newts included any suitable terrestrial habitat within 200 metres of a water body in accordance with NIEA Specific Requirements; and
 - (iii) Confirmation that protected species surveys were carried out for Red squirrel and Common or Viviparous Lizard in accordance with NIEA Specific Requirements.
252. In February 2019, the Agent provided a response to the clarifications sought by NED.
253. With regard to point (i), the response confirmed that the surveys undertaken to inform the proposals were carried out between September 2016 and June

2017. The view was expressed that whilst the surveys were completed in excess of 12 months before submission to the Council, the data associated with the surveys remains robust and valid for 2 to 3 survey seasons unless there are clear reasons why this would not be acceptable. The view was also expressed that the current data would not become unreliable until 2019.

254. In relation to point (ii), the response confirmed that where present suitable terrestrial habitat was searched within 200 metres of waterbodies in combination with aquatic surveys.
255. The response explained that due to the nature of the site (agricultural fields), suitable terrestrial habitat was limited. No smooth newts were recorded during any terrestrial elements of the survey and that as reported within the ES chapter, a small population of smooth newts were recorded during aquatic surveys.
256. With regard to point (iii), the response provided confirms that no surveys were undertaken for Red Squirrel and Common Lizard as initial survey work concluded that the site was unsuitable for such species.
257. The view was expressed that the Red Squirrel was predominantly restricted to coniferous forest areas requiring a varied diet of seeds, nuts, buds, fungi and berries and that the common lizard in Northern Ireland is generally restricted to upland or coastal environments and the application site falls outside these ranges.
258. NED in a response dated 12 March 2019 confirmed that they had reviewed the information provided and our environmental records in the vicinity of the proposed development. The response noted that a suite of surveys (species/habitat) had been undertaken.
259. The advice provided recommended that further information was required as follows to allow NED to fully assess the proposed development:
- (i) Whilst content with the findings of the badger assessment, in that no evidence was found throughout the site and as such, the full badger survey was not required to be appended to the environmental statement, confirmed was required that the survey included 25m outside the site boundary.
 - (ii) The Otter, Bat and Newt surveys are required to be appended to the environmental statement.

The otter and newt survey reports should be to NIEA specifications and detail any proposed mitigation/compensation etc.

The bat survey should comply with NIEA specifications and BCT guidelines and all information gathered should be presented in the report.

Maps should include Surveyor positions, bat activity etc. (See Chapter 11 of BCT guidelines).

Both the bat and otter assessments should include any potential impact of the proposed bridge across the river lagan and any mitigation. NIEA NED reserved the right to determine whether the survey is adequate or when additional information is required (including updated surveys).

260. As indicated above, and to take account of the passage of time, surveys have subsequently been refreshed and provided by way of Addendum to the earlier Environmental Statement.
261. NED in a response received on 03 January 2020, provided recommendations regarding designated and protected sites, habitats and species including the need for an outline CEMP to be submitted and for a condition requiring a Bat Mitigation Plan to be submitted and approved in writing by the Council prior to any development activity taking place.
262. Given that the mixed use development will give rise to no significant adverse effects on habitats or species of ecological or nature conservation value, the proposed development is unlikely to result in any cumulative impact upon these features when considered alone or as demonstrated by way of separate report in combination with the associated link road scheme.

Access, Movement and Parking

263. The SPPS recognises that the successful integration of transport and land uses is fundamental to the objective of furthering sustainable development and that planning has a vital contributing role for improving connectivity and promoting more sustainable patterns of transport and travel.
264. The regional strategic objectives for transportation and land use identified at paragraph 6.297 of the SPPS are as follows:
- promote sustainable patterns of development which reduce the need for motorised transport, encourages active travel, and facilitate travel by public transport in preference to the private car;
 - ensure accessibility for all, with the needs of people with disabilities and others whose mobility is impaired given particular consideration;
 - promote the provision of adequate facilities for cyclists in new development;
 - promote parking policies that will assist in reducing reliance on the private car and help tackle growing congestion;
 - protect routes required for new transport schemes including disused transport routes with potential for future reuse;
 - restrict the number of new accesses and control the level of use of existing accesses onto Protected Routes; and

- promote road safety, in particular for pedestrians, cyclists and other vulnerable road users.
265. PPS 3 – Access, Movement and Parking sets out the policies for vehicular access and pedestrian access, transport assessments, the protection of transport routes and parking. It forms an important element in the integration of transport and land use planning and it embodies the Government’s commitment to the provision of a modern, safe, sustainable transport system.
266. The Belfast Metropolitan Transport Plan (BMTP) proposals for Lisburn are consistent with the overall objective of developing a modern, integrated transport system for the Belfast Metropolitan Area (BMA) that supports the principles of sustainable development.
267. This plan notes that the construction of the M1-Knockmore Link Road to provide access to West Lisburn is included in the BMTP as a proposal that will directly support the planning expansion of Lisburn.
268. The SPPS recognises that the successful integration of transport and land uses is fundamental to the objective of furthering sustainable development and that planning has a vital contributing role for improving connectivity and promoting more sustainable patterns of transport and travel.
269. The regional strategic objectives for transportation and land use identified at paragraph 6.297 of the SPPS are as follows:
- promote sustainable patterns of development which reduce the need for motorised transport, encourages active travel, and facilitate travel by public transport in preference to the private car;
 - ensure accessibility for all, with the needs of people with disabilities and others whose mobility is impaired given particular consideration;
 - promote the provision of adequate facilities for cyclists in new development;
 - promote parking policies that will assist in reducing reliance on the private car and help tackle growing congestion;
 - protect routes required for new transport schemes including disused transport routes with potential for future reuse;
 - restrict the number of new accesses and control the level of use of existing accesses onto Protected Routes; and
 - promote road safety, in particular for pedestrians, cyclists and other vulnerable road users.
270. PPS 3 – Access, Movement and Parking sets out the policies for vehicular access and pedestrian access, transport assessments, the protection of transport routes and parking. It forms an important element in the integration of transport and land use planning and it embodies the Government’s commitment to the provision of a modern, safe, sustainable transport system.

Creating an Accessible Environment

271. Policy AMP1 – Creating an Accessible Environment aims to create an accessible environment for everyone.
272. As demonstrated within the context of planning application LA05/2018/1155/F the road alignment and detailed specification of the proposed M1-Knockmore link road has been informed by an understanding of the following:
- Extent of the River Lagan floodplain
 - Retaining existing buildings on the wider site and ensuring appropriate set back distance;
 - Connecting into the existing road network; and
 - Retention of mature landscaping within the designated Local Landscape Policy area in the northern portion of the site.
273. Detail submitted in support of the application demonstrates that the alignment design includes five key junctions as follows:
- Initial tie into existing dumbbell roundabout at junction 8 of the M1 to include an access point to the existing Park and Ride site.
 - An initial internal, roundabout to the north of junction 8 to create a link to proposed employment uses and the future connection to a new road to Maze Long Kesh further west.
 - A signal junction where the MKLR crosses the existing Blaris Road to facilitate safe movement for pedestrians around the residential and commercial high street core of the wider new neighbourhood.
 - A second signal junction to the north of Blaris Road to create a further main access to the residential land north of Blaris Road and towards the River Park.
 - A tie in to the existing Knockmore Road / Moira Road signals and creation of a new fourth arm linking to the new bridge over the lagan.
274. The detail provided demonstrates how the scheme has been design in accordance with current design standards taking into account and expected vehicle and pedestrian usage.

Accessibility

275. Detail explains that there are a range of regular services bus routes in and around Lisburn with existing bus stops located around the periphery of the application site. The proposed development provides opportunity to extend these routes through the site, facilitating circular town services.
276. Lisburn Train Station lies on the Newry to Bangor railway line which provides approximately 50 services a day to and from Belfast. Supporting information explains that these services are more frequent around rush hour times.

Facilities

277. It is noted that the extensive industrial parks/areas of employment to the north of the site while to the south, Sprucefield provides an extensive retail offer and that Lisburn City Centre which is 2.5 km from the site, also provides a wide range of facilities with convenient transport links and existing bus services.
278. Detail submitted with the application demonstrates that these facilities can be strengthened to embraced orbital routes to connect through the application lands.
279. The D&AS deals with connections and access arrangements. Paragraph 24.1 advises the Link Road and Blaris Road constitute the main organising movement corridors off which a large number of primary residential streets will be provided.
280. Paragraph 224.3 of the statement advises that pedestrian access will be provided at all vehicle access pints as well as where any other opportunity exists.
281. The detail provided also demonstrates the presence a number of existing pedestrian paths surrounding the site and explains how a series of off-road paths connect the main green spaces within the site providing an improved walkway adjacent to the River Lagan.
282. Proposed pedestrian and cycle routes will be provided along the main link road and along the Blaris Road itself with further path networks provided throughout the green network providing for a level of integration with existing path networks around the site with connections provided to the National Cycle network path.

Access to Public Roads

283. Policy AMP 2 – Access to Public Roads states that planning permission will only be granted for a development proposal involving direct access, or the intensification of the use of an existing access, on to a public road where:
- (a) Such access will not prejudice road safety or significantly inconvenience the flow of traffic; and
 - (b) The proposal does not conflict with Policy AMP 3 – Access to Protected Routes.
284. Policy AMP 3 – Access to Protected Routes states that planning authorities will restrict the number of new access and control the level of use of existing accesses onto Protected Routes.

285. It also directs that planning permission will only be granted for a development proposal involving direct access, or the intensification of the use of an existing access
- (a) where access cannot reasonably be taken from an adjacent minor road; or
 - (b) in the case of proposals involving residential development, it is demonstrated to the Departments satisfaction that the nature and level of access onto the Protected Route will significantly assist in the creation of a quality environment without compromising standards of road safety or resulting in an unacceptable proliferation of access points.
286. Question 12 of the P1 Form indicates that access arrangements for this mixed use development involve construction of new accesses to the public road and the alteration of existing access for both vehicular and pedestrian use.
287. The supporting planning statement dated October 2019 explains at paragraph 5.153 that the proposal has been the subject of a comprehensive transport assessment, an assessment which has looked at the impact of the proposed M1-Knockmore link road on the wider Lisburn network and the sustainable transport infrastructure that is promised for the wider Blaris area.
288. Paragraph 5.155 of the planning statement explains that the modelling assessment demonstrates that the M1-Knockmore link road provides additional capacity to the existing transportation infrastructure and enhances multi-modal accessibility to public transport with the opportunity to provide orbital city centre services linking to the key attractors of Lisburn City Centre, the proposed Knockmore rail and park and ride site and intervening areas.
289. Design principles as outlined in the associated link road application [LA05/2018/1155/F] as agreed with DfI Roads prior to the application being submitted have been embedded into the detailed design of the road in relation to
- Dual Carriageway cross section matching A101 design specification and designed to a speed of 50mph with the following design characteristics:
 - Four 3.65 metre lanes (to suit HGV traffic)
 - Two 1.0 metre hard strips at carriageway edges;
 - 2.7 metre grass central reserve including 200mm edge strips;
 - 5 metre grass verge on western and eastern side; and
 - 4 metre shared footway/cycleway on eastern side of the carriageway.
 - Four Lane Road cross section from the roundabout heading towards the northward, designed to a speed of 40mph and comprised of the following:
 - Four 3.5 metre lands designed to speed limit of 40mph;
 - no hard strips at carriageway edges to reflect and be consistent with the existing Knockmore Road;
 - no central reserve;

- 2 metre central reserve;
 - 2 metre footway on western and eastern side; and
 - 5 metre grass verge on western and eastern side.
- Bridge cross section, designed to 40mph with bridge section comprising the following elements:
 - four 3.5 metre lanes,
 - no hard strips at carriage way edges to match the existing status of Knockmore Road;
 - no central reserves;
 - 2.5 metre footway on western side;
 - 3.75 metre shared footway/cycleway on eastern side; and
 - two 0.5 metre parapet widths
 - Blaris Road design specification comprises
 - 7.3 metre carriageway;
 - 2 metre footway
 - 3 metre cycleway; and
 - 2/3 metre landscape strip

290. As explained, the route of the new corridor passes over the river lagan which creates the need for a bridge at this location.

291. Various design iterations have been assessed to consider the impact of the bridge structure on the River Lagan Floodplain and that it has been concluded that the overall length of the bridge should be 73 metres in two spans before the structure would cause an increase in flood level.

292. It is likely that the bridge will need to be piled and that the depths and size of piles will be confirmed following a detailed site investigation and detail submitted with the application(s) advises that the preferred construction method for the bridge deck is the use of precast beams to minimise the construction period adjacent to the river. The associated double spans will require employment of W16 precast bridge beams with a 200mm deck slab giving a structural depth of around 2.2 metres.

293. Detail submitted with the link road application explains that it is proposed to have a number of smaller priority junctions along the route to serve smaller sections of the development and to create permeability along the route.

Transport Assessment

294. Policy AMP 6 – Transport Assessment states that In order to evaluate the transport implications of a development proposal the Department will, where appropriate, require developers to submit a Transport Assessment

295. The Transport Assessment embedded within the Environmental Statement provides an assessment of Travel Characteristics with regard to pedestrian facilities, cycling facilities, public transport facilities (including Sprucefield Park and Ride, West Lisburn Rail Halt and the Rapid Transit – Glider) and private vehicle trips.
296. It also provides an assessment of impacts in terms of traffic impacts, existing traffic flows and traffic growth. Junction analysis are also carried out as part of the wider Transport Assessment.
297. The analysis within the TA concludes that the proposed traffic volumes through Lisburn City Centre do not exceed the existing levels (without the Link Road in place).
298. Paragraph 4.7 of the addendum to the Environmental Statement advises that minor changes to the proposed link road have no impact on the Transportation Assessment.

Environmental Considerations – Transport

299. Chapter 6 of the Environmental Statement is prepared by RPS to assess the impact of the proposed 1.6 km new link road.
300. It explains that the construction of the link road will facilitate access to a proposed new mixed use neighbourhood and that the design of the link road has been developed to satisfy highways requirements for this strategic route and to ensure that it is of a standard to accommodate the anticipated total quantum of development anticipated at Blaris.
301. Baseline conditions and embedded mitigation are outlined in the respective Chapters.
302. A baseline assessment of four modes of transport (pedestrian, cycling, public transport and private vehicle) was carried out as detailed in the Transport Assessment.
303. In terms of embedded mitigation, the Statements advise that the proposed development has been designed to encourage sustainable modes of transport and that public transport facilities will be incorporated within the proposed development site along with bus stops (two north bound and three south bound) at identified locations on the M1 Knockmore Link Road.
304. The use of public transport, translink incentives in the form of Travel Card/iLink/ALink cards will be implemented as part of the scheme.
305. As detailed at paragraphs 6.31 – 6.35, the assessment of the effects of the proposed development on the surrounding highway network demonstrates that the provision of the Link Road will significantly improve traffic progression

through Lisburn City Centre and that it will provide a direct link to the strategic road network for the west of Lisburn and in doing so, creates the opportunity for orbital bus services to connect to the existing radial services, improves the attractiveness of the proposed expanded park and ride site and also the proposed rail halt (and associated park and ride) at Knockmore.

306. The Link Road also provides potential to connect to a future link road to Maze Long Kesh further west.
307. Furthermore, the statement indicates that in addition to the direct positive long term impact of the proposed link road on traffic progression within Lisburn City Centre, the proposed mixed use development will increase and enhance the use of sustainable modes of transport and reduce reliance on private car trips which results in positive long term impact upon the existing local road network (including Blaris Road) in Lisburn due to the re-distribution of traffic associated with the provision of the Knockmore Link Road.
308. Chapter 4 of the Addendum to the Environmental Statement notes that the Transport Assessment assumed that the entire mixed use development is constructed and operation in the year of opening when in reality with the exception of the link road, the development associated with the mixed use application will be constructed over a 15 year period.
309. It also confirms at paragraph 4.4 that trip assessment has been revisited to consider the changes in land use breakdown and floor space figures associated with the amended Masterplan. The assessment confirms that the person trips in the AM peak hour remain unchanged from the original TA. In the PM peak hour, the amended proposal generates a total of 1925 trips against the original 2062 trips.
310. DfI Roads advised in a response received on 24 April 2020 that they had no objection subject to inclusion of conditions to ensure there is a satisfactory means of access in the interests of road safety and the convenience of road users; to ensure access is maintained to the Sprucefield Park and Ride site at all times; to ensure the cost of operations associated with the provision and maintenance of signalised junctions are borne by the applicant during initial operations and to ensure that all highway structures, retaining walls and culverting structures are designed in accordance with required standards.
311. Based on a review of the roads related information and the advice from DfI Roads, it is considered that the proposed link road development will create an accessible environment for everyone and that the access arrangements proposed to the public road and the creation new accesses to a public road will not prejudice road safety or significantly inconvenience the flow of traffic; nor will the proposal conflict with tests associated with Policy AMP 3 – Access to Protected Routes.

312. Furthermore, the Transport Assessment has allowed for the transport implications of the link road development on the surrounding road network to be evaluated.
313. With regard to environmental effects associated with transport issues the Environmental Statement and associated Addendum demonstrate that the traffic impacts associated with the proposed link road development is sufficient to address the impacts of the proposed mixed use development on the surrounding road network.
314. It also demonstrates that the proposed development has been designed to encourage sustainable modes of transport and that public transport facilities, that the use of public transport will be promoted and implemented through Translink incentives and that it will significantly improve traffic progression through Lisburn City Centre, provide a direct link to the strategic road network for the west of Lisburn and in doing so, create the opportunity for orbital bus services to connect to the existing radial services.

Archaeology and Built Heritage

315. Paragraph 6.3 of the SPPS advises that the aim in relation to Archaeology and Built Heritage is to manage change in positive ways so as to safeguard that which society regards as significant whilst facilitating development that will contribute to the ongoing preservation, conservation and enhancement of these assets.
316. PPS 6 - Planning, Archaeology and the Built Heritage sets out policies for the protection of our archaeology and built heritage.

Protection of Archaeological remains of local importance and their settings

317. Policy BH 2 – Protection of Archaeological remains of local importance and their settings states that development proposals which would adversely affect archaeological sites or monuments which are of local importance or their settings will only be permitted where the planning authority considers the importance of the proposed development or other material considerations outweigh the value of the remains in question.

Archaeological Assessment and Evaluation

318. Policy BH 3 - Archaeological Assessment and Evaluation states that where the impact of a development proposal on important archaeological remains is unclear, or the relative importance of such remains is uncertain, the Department will normally require developers to provide further information in the form of an archaeological assessment or an archaeological evaluation.

319. The policy also advises that where such information is requested but not made available the planning authority will normally refuse planning permission.

Archaeological Mitigation

320. Policy BH 4 – Archaeological Mitigation states that where it is decided to grant planning permission for development which will affect sites known to contain archaeological remains, the planning authority will impose conditions to ensure that appropriate measures are taken for the identification and mitigation of the archaeological impacts of the development, including where appropriate, the completion of a licensed excavation and recording of remains before development commences.

321. Historic Environment Division (HED) – Monuments provide comment on the application in December 2018 which confirm that they have reviewed the submitted Cultural Heritage section in the Environmental Statement (Chapter 13) and that they are content that this has adequately identified the potential archaeological impacts of the proposed development.

322. The response advised that the application site is in immediate vicinity to the medieval church site at Blaris (DOW 014:046), and contains the World War II airbase, RAF Blaris, that is included in the Defence Heritage Project.

323. The response notes that the chapter identified concerns over the operation of Blaris airfield (DHP 120), and that it further identified that the area of the suggested airfield was used as a military camp dating back to the 1798 Rebellion.

324. The advice provided acknowledged that the application site was over 17 hectares in size and that experience has shown that that large development sites such as this are rarely archaeologically sterile, and given the known archaeology within the immediate area there is a potential for previously unrecorded below ground archaeological remains to be found during ground works for the proposal.

325. In light of this, advice received advised that any acceptable archaeological programme of works should include an appropriate mitigation strategy to identify and record any features associated with these sequences of use.

326. The response explained that this programme is required to identify and record any archaeological remains in advance of new construction, or to provide for their preservation in situ, as per Policy BH 4 of PPS 6.

Environmental Information – Cultural Heritage

327. The Cultural Heritage Chapter of the environmental statement has been prepared to assess the likely significant effects of the proposed development on

the historic environment with particular reference to the likely effects to archaeology receptors within the site and built heritage assets both within and outside the site including their setting.

328. Considerations have been given to all built heritage assets within 1 km radius of the sit.
329. Baseline conditions identify the nearest designated archaeological heritage asset as Lagan Navigation Reach 10 (DOW 009:500, IHR no. 2680) which lies 950 metres east of the application site. The archaeological assessment established that there was no intervisibility between the site and this asset due to distance, intervening modern housing and vegetation. As such, the assessment considered that no impact could arise.
330. The statement advises that there are no non-designated archaeological heritage assets mapped within the site. It also advises that it is possible that the link road site lies at in part within land that was use both as a military camp and/or an airfield.
331. The farmstead around Carlton House/Myrtle Hill is considered to represent the best location for settlement within the wider study area.
332. Information notes that the development associated with the road link has the potential to impact only on Carlton House which is a non-designated heritage asset of low value.
333. The NTS notes that the construction phase will include engineering and construction works within the setting of the building (primarily associated with the construction of the bridge to carry the road over the Lagan) introducing additional noise, dust, vibration and some visual interference. This will have an adverse impact on the present sense of isolation and relative tranquillity experienced for a temporary period.
334. It also advises that at the operational stage, the proposed development of the link road will result in indirect impacts to the value of Carton House as a result of the noise and lighting associated with the road whilst the new bridge structure is likely to be a visible feature within the setting of the building.
335. A former medieval church is also identified immediately adjacent to the sites south eastern boundary associated with the later graveyard (DOW014:046). Based on evidence available, the assessment identifies a low theoretical potential for the site to contain undiscovered archaeological evidence from any period.
336. With regard to Built Heritage, assessment identified no designated built heritage assets within the site.
337. Based on information provided, there are no known archaeological heritage assets mapped within the footprint of the proposed link road development.

That said, the statement notes at paragraph 13.57 that a programme of archaeological works may be required to determine the presence or absence of any archaeological remains.

Quality Residential Environments

338. Policy QD2 – Design Concept Statements states that a planning authority will require the submission of a Design Concept Statement, or where appropriate a Concept Master Plan, to accompany all planning applications for residential development.
339. The policy states that a Concept Master Plan will be required for planning applications involving:
- (a) 300 dwellings or more; or
 - (b) the development, in part or full, of sites of 15 hectares or more zoned for housing in development plans; or
 - (c) housing development on any other site of 15 hectares or more.
340. A Concept Master Plan is provided within the Design and Access Statement dated October 2020 at section 15.0. The Master Plan seeks explain the design vision and principles underpinning the proposed development at Blaris.
341. In summary, it includes:
- Alignment of the MKLR/bridge
 - Realignment of Blaris Road
 - Accommodating existing services
 - Drainage Strategy
 - Access Strategy
 - Landscape Strategy
342. Paragraph 15.3 of the Design and Access Statement along with the visual plan demonstrates how the remainder of the zoned lands could be developed for:
- 2300 homes in total (1300 of which are within the mixed use application boundary);
 - Approximately 1.5 million square feet of employment floor space in total with some 754,000 square feet within the mixed use application boundary;
 - Commercial Area/Neighbourhood Centre within the mixed use application boundary;
 - Parkland and open spaces; and
 - A Park and Ride facility.
343. In respect of the planning history an outline planning application process was abandoned in favour of a development framework for the land use zoning.

344. It is brought to the member's attention that whilst the submitted concept assists in demonstrating how the future development of the neighbouring lands might be developed it presumes all the land to the north of the Blaris Road will be developed for housing.
345. The construction of the road unlocks the potential of the land and there is no policy that requires owners with land interests outside the application site to contribute to the cost of the infrastructure where no agreed developer framework is brought forward through an application process or secured through the local development plan process.
346. It cannot be assumed the balance of the land will be developed for housing. The question of whether this proposal will prejudice the comprehensive development of the wider lands is to be considered as part of the planning assessment.
347. The applicant is advised that this is a developer led road proposal and housing can only be weighed as an exception on the basis of the mix of uses proposed meets the cost of the proposed infrastructure. This assumption is not challenged at the pre-determination hearing.
348. As previously stated the developer chose not to bring forward a framework for all the West Lisburn (Blaris) zoning and has asked for this proposal to be considered on its own merits.
349. It is considered that the balance of the land could still be developed for employment with suitable mitigation in the form of a buffer which provides clear segregation between the neighbouring uses. The housing in the application site is supported by all the necessary transport infrastructure, neighbour facilities and open spaces.
350. It could be regarded that the scheme as proposed is an 'urban village' sitting next to an area of major employment where there is ease of access to future employment opportunity without the need to commute long distances.
351. Again the point is reinforced that the concept does **not** prejudice the future development of the West Lisburn (Blaris) land for employment.
352. Whilst an outline application with no specific housing layout details provided, the supporting statement advises at paragraph 5.171 that the residential element of the proposal will be designed specifically to ensure compliance with all aspects of PPS 7 so as to deliver a quality residential environment.
353. The view is expressed at paragraph 5.173 of the supporting statement that the new Blaris neighbourhood will deliver a very high quality of residential living environment with strong emphasis on local bus routes through the site and the creation of a highly walkable and connected new neighbourhood with ease of access to supporting community services and facilities.

354. The D&AS provides detail of the indicative Height, Scale and Massing to be associated with the employment and residential elements at section 17.
355. With regard to employment, the indicative buildings shown in the illustrative masterplan are in response to their proposed use taking into account similar buildings in the nearby industrial/employment areas as well as proposed neighbouring uses.
356. Indicative maximum and minimum building lengths, widths and heights are provided. The majority of employment development is up to 2 storeys, however this could increase to 3 or 4 storeys where there is an opportunity for signature and gateway buildings at key locations.
357. In relation to residential, the indicative buildings shown in the illustrative masterplan detail indicates that building heights will vary across the master plan area relative to location. Detail indicates that the prominent height will be 2 storeys, apartments will be either 3 or 3.5 storey in height with townhouses set at 2.5 storey.
358. Based on this detail, it is accepted that there is scope for the proposal to create a quality residential environment incorporating a mix of house types including detached, semi-detached, terrace dwellings and apartments in accordance with the requirements of the SPPS and policy QD 1 of PPS7 without adversely impacting on the character of the area or have a detrimental impact on the amenity of existing residents in properties adjoining the site.

Open Space

359. Planning Policy Statement 8 – Open Space, Sport and Outdoor Recreation sets out planning policies for the protection of open space, the provision of new areas of open space in association with residential development and the use of land for sport and outdoor recreation.
360. Policy OS 3 – Public Open Space in New Residential Development states that planning authorities will only permit proposals for new residential developments of 25 or more units, or on sites of one hectare or more, where public open space is provided as an integral part of the development.
361. It advises that for residential development of more than 100 units or more, or for development sites of 5 hectares or more, an equipped children's play area will be required as an integral part of the development.
362. The policy directs that where the provision of public open space is required under this policy, the precise amount, location, type and design of such provision will be negotiated with applicants taking account of the specific characteristics of the development, the site and its context and having regard to the following:

- (i) A normal expectation will be at least 10% of the total site area;
- (ii) For residential development of 300 units or more, or for development sites of 15 hectares or more, a normal expectation will be around 15% of the total site area; and
- (iii) Provision at a rate less than 10% of the total site area may be acceptable where the residential development:
 - is located within a town or city centre; or • is close to and would benefit from ease of access to areas of existing public open space; or
 - provides accommodation for special groups, such as the elderly or people with disabilities; or
 - incorporates the 'Home Zone' concept. For residential development of 100 units or more, or for development sites of 5 hectares or more, an equipped children's play area will be required.

363. Paragraph 5.175 of the supporting statement dated October 2019 acknowledges that the development at Blaris will exceed the 15% open space requirement through the provision of a new riverside park and a variety of open spaces identified as integral parts of the concept master plan.

364. Chapter 12 of the Environmental Statement - Landscape and Visual Chapter of the Environmental Statement explains the provision of open space.

365. Section 8.0 of the Design and Access Statement dated October 2020 provides detail on the landscape assessment and landscape opportunities. Section

366. Design concept diagrams set out in section 14.0 of the Design and Access Statement dated October 2020 provide details of the proposed Green Network associated with the River Park, Green Spine and Lateral Green Connections.

367. Section 18.0 of the Design and Access Statement dated October 2020 makes reference to the existing landscape features of the site that have informed the framework for the concept master plan. It also provides detail on Landscape Components namely the River Park, Countryside Edge, Green Network, the Avenue and Parks that will serve to create a strong sense of place and identity for the new neighbourhood.

368. In terms of quantum of open space the Design and Access Statement dated October 2019 illustrates how and where the public open space will be delivered

- River Park – 16.95 hectares (15% of site)
- Countryside Edge – 13.79 hectares = (12% of site)
- Green Network – 5.50 hectares = (5% of the site)
- The Avenue – landscaped new link road which serves to enhance active travel links across the site
- Parks – 1.04 hectares (1% of the site)

369. Paragraph 18.7 of the Design and Access Statement dated October 2020 advises that in total, approximately 37.2 hectares of public open space is provided representing 33% of the total site area.
370. Members are advised that this must be reconciled against the fact that a large part of the application site is in the flood plain of the River Lagan. It is not developable land and the proportion of open space as a proportion of the housing land is not specified.
371. This was discussed in detail at the pre-determination and it is accepted that the open space requirements for the housing will be met in full at 15% of the total land area proposed for housing.
372. The management arrangements for the River Park raise significant questions about public access and accessibility and will give rise to cost in terms of future management and maintenance. It is our understanding that this cost of the delivery of park will be met in full by the developer. The management and maintenance arrangements will be dealt with by means of a planning condition.

Housing in Settlements

373. Paragraph 6.133 of the SPPS states that good quality housing is a fundamental human need that plays a significant role in shaping our lives and our communities. A home is a vital part of people's lives and contributes to creating a safe, healthy and prosperous society. The planning system can play a positive and supporting role in the delivery of homes to meet the full range of housing needs of society, within the wider framework of sustainable development
374. Strategic Policy also advises that achieving balanced communities and strengthening community cohesion is one of the major themes underpinning the RDS and that the provision of good quality housing offering a variety of house types, sizes and tenures to meet different needs, and development that provides opportunities for the community to share in local employment, shopping, leisure and social facilities, is fundamental to the building of more balanced communities.
375. PPS 12 – Housing in Settlements identifies a range of criteria to be considered when selecting suitable sites for housing.
376. The mixed use application (2018/1154/O) is an outline application. Advice received from the Northern Ireland Housing Executive on 30 March 2021 explains that the Housing Executive determines the need and housing mix for all social housing schemes through a housing needs assessment and that such an assessment examines waiting list demand, supply and trends.
377. A range of other factors are also considered including demographic trends e.g. increasing family households.

378. The response extends and offer to discuss the provision of a social housing component based on the level of current housing need in this part of Lisburn.

Social Housing Need

379. With regard to future social housing need, the response explains that the Housing Executive carries out Housing Need Assessments (HNA) annually across all relevant Common Landlord Areas / Housing Need Assessment Areas and that this site is located within the Lisburn/Dunmurry Urban Housing Need Assessment Area.

380. It is further stated that the demand for social housing in the **Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council** area is increasing year by year and the projected social housing need indicates a requirement for **1,457** new units of social housing accommodation across the Council area over the 5 year period 2020-2025.

381. The following table provides a summary of waiting list information for the past three years for the Lisburn/Dunmurry urban area:

Lisburn / Dunmurry Urban Waiting List

	Waiting List Applicants (Total)	Waiting List Applicants (in Housing Stress)
Sept 2018	1348	993
Sept 2019	1300	983
Sept 2020	1446	1079

382. Based on the existing and projected need the response advises that the Housing Executive would wish to see up to 20% of any residential development on this site committed to the provision of affordable housing i.e. a combination of social rented housing and intermediate housing.

383. The response notes in error that the developer has already indicated a willingness to offer 10% social units (130 units). The offer from the developer is 10% affordable housing assuming 1300 residential units are delivered. The current definition of affordable housing provides for both social and intermediate need.

384. The view expressed is that the Housing Executive can support a 10% need that is made up entirely of social housing and suggests that the applicant or developer discuss the housing mix, layout, finance and delivery timing of the social housing units in consultation with a Registered Housing Association to ensure those units are designed in accordance with Department for Communities (DfC) Design Standards.

Intermediate Demand

385. With regard to the Intermediate Demand, the response welcomes the inclusion of accommodation to help address the demand for intermediate housing in the Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council area.
386. The response advises that the requirement for this provision is based on the Housing Executive's knowledge of the local housing market; our assessment of the intermediate market; and the level of Co-ownership activity in the Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council area.
387. The Housing Executive estimates intermediate housing demand for the Lisburn & Castlereagh Council area at 146 units of accommodation per year.
388. Reference is made to average house prices in Lisburn & Castlereagh having fluctuated since 2014 and to them remaining consistently higher than the Northern Ireland average.
389. In 2019/20 a total of 98 applications for Co-Ownership housing were approved in the Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council area reflecting the demand for intermediate housing in the current housing market.
390. Given the intention for the overall scheme is to be phased, NIHE would want to see social units delivered in the early phases to meet the current identified housing need.
391. Within this context, and in light of the pressing social housing need within the wider Council area, it is considered that the Council should enter in to discussions with the developer in relation to an affordable housing provision that is focused on delivering a social housing need and that this should be secured by way of a planning agreement.

Planning and Flood Risk

392. The SPPS recognises that flooding is a natural process that cannot be entirely prevented. It also acknowledges that climate change is generally expected to increase flood risk, albeit that there remains much uncertainty as to the degree of climate change that will occur and the implications for particular areas of Northern Ireland.
393. PPS 15 – Planning and Flood Risk sets out policy to minimise and manage flood risk to people, property and the environment. The susceptibility of all land to flooding is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.
394. The planning and supporting statement dated October 2019 confirms that in line with PPS 15, chapter 11 of the Environmental Statement - Hydrology and

Drainage and the associated Flood Risk assessments consider all possible sources of flooding.

395. The River Lagan which is designated under the Drainage (NI) Order 1973 flows through part of the site and will be crossed by the proposed road. There are a number of tributaries of the River Lagan in the area but these are outside of the development area.
396. Paragraph 5.193 of the supporting statement advises that the development layout has been designed so that all predicted floodplain areas are avoided, with the floodplain area being used as a riverside park.
397. Confirmation is provided at paragraph 5.194 that levels in this area will not be raised and that the food storage capacity and flood conveyance routes will not be reduced by unsuitable planting or obstructions.
398. Paragraph 5.195 advises that the only element of the development that will be within the floodplain is the link road and that exception (d) of PPS 15 applies in this instance.
399. With regard to policy FLD 3, paragraph 5.198 advises that development will only be permitted where it is demonstrated through a Drainage Assessment that adequate measures will be put in place so as to effectively mitigate the flood risk to the proposed development and from elsewhere.
400. Paragraphs 5.199 – 5.201 of the supporting planning statement dated October 2019 summarises drainage arrangements as follows:
 - (i) Drainage design will take account of the proposed levels throughout the site so that any surface water runoff will be intercepted and will not cause localised flooding.
 - (ii) The storm runoff from the development site will discharge at Greenfield rate to the adjacent watercourses at a number of locations
 - (iii) Discharge to each outfall will be restricted by hydrobrake.
 - (iv) Attenuation will be provided by the use of attenuation cells, oversized pipes or storage ponds
401. Chapter 9 of the Addendum Statement indicates at paragraph 9.4 that a revised Flood Risk and Drainage Assessment is provided to take account of changes to the Masterplan in addition to addressing comment from DfI Rivers which are noted to relate to Policy FLD 1 considerations.
402. Section 5.1 of the amended Flood Risk and Drainage Assessment confirms that the Masterplan site will be affected in areas by the floodplain of the River Lagan. It also advises that Historic flood maps confirm that the River Lagan has flooded at this location.
403. Due to the inland location, there is no risk of coastal flooding at this site.

404. In terms of the potential for surface water flooding, section 5.3 of the amended Flood Risk and Drainage Assessment indicates that the site is not significantly affected by surface water flooding.
405. Taking into account the amended Flood Risk and Drainage Assessment the mitigation measures are proposed in relation to the proposed link road and bridge; development layout and finished floor levels to decrease the risk of river flooding from the River Lagan to the proposed development and to minimise the impact of flooding elsewhere as a result of the development.
406. In terms of Drainage, section 7 of the amended Flood Risk and Drainage Assessment advises that the drainage strategy is to discharge Greenfield runoff only from the proposed development into adjacent watercourses based on a figure of 10l/s/ha.
407. It explains that the site and road have been divided into a number of plots, each of which have a separate discharge location and storage provided to limit the discharge to greenfield runoff through the use of attenuation cells, oversized pipes or ponds.
408. The discharge from the storage areas will be restricted by the use of a flow control device.
409. A Clarification Note provided in October 2020 provides detail on the most up to date drainage strategy. It explains that increased developable area as a result of the Masterplan changes has resulted in an increased greenfield runoff and attenuation required for plot 4. An attenuation pond/cell previously showing within the housing layout has been relocated further north in response to design levels.
410. The view is expressed that the drainage changes do not impact on the flood risk at the site and do not change the conclusions of the previous Drainage Assessment.
411. Rivers Agency in a response received on 18 November 2020 confirmed they had reviewed the Clarification Note dated October 2020, that they had no reason to disagree with the statement.
412. The response also advised that comments in relation to Policy FLD 1, 2, 3, 4 & 5 remain the same as per a consultation response dated 23rd January 2020.
413. Advice from the Drainage and Water Units within the Department for Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) received on 15 January 2019 confirmed that the Drinking Water inspectorate had considered the impacts of the proposal on potential private water supplies have been considered and that subject to relevant statutory consents being granted to protect such supplies.

414. The Water Management Unit confirmed that it had considered the impacts of the proposal on surface water environment and on the basis of the information provided were content subject to condition in relation to the provision of a detailed construction environment management plan (CEMP) to ensure effective avoidance and mitigation measures have been planned for the protection of the water environment.
415. Based on detail submitted and advice received from statutory consultees, it is accepted that the principle of a mixed use development from a flood risk and drainage perspective is acceptable.

Tourism

416. The RDS recognises tourism as a key element underpinning sustainable economic growth in Northern Ireland RG4 seeks to promote a sustainable approach to the provision of tourism infrastructure.
417. Strategic policy acknowledges that tourism makes a vital contribution to the Northern Ireland economy in terms of the revenues it generates, the employment opportunities it provides, and the potential it creates for economic growth. As well as direct spending on holiday accommodation and use of tourist amenities, tourism plays an important role in helping to support the viability of many local supplies, services and facilities.
418. Paragraph 6.252 of the SPPS notes that the executive identifies tourism as one of the building blocks to underpin its priority of growing a sustainable economy and investing in the future.
419. PPS 16 – Tourism sets out the Department’s planning policy for tourism development, including the main forms of tourist accommodation and tourist amenities.
420. PPS 16 is supportive of tourism growth and new hotel proposals within settlement limits subject to scale, size and design.
421. The mixed use application includes provision for a new hotel consistent with KSR of the Local Development Plan. It is anticipated that the hotel offer will extend over four storeys. The concept Masterplan indicates that the hotel is to be located close to the mixed use neighbourhood centre at the junction of the M1 Knockmore link road and Blaris Road. It is recognised that hotel accommodation sited in close proximity to employment land assists in securing future employment growth.
422. The planning supporting statement dated October 2019 indicates that the hotel will be an important addition to accommodation provision in the wider Lisburn area.

423. As explained above, paragraph 9.280 of the SPPS states that a sequential tests should be applied to planning applications for main town centres uses that are not in an existing centre and are not in accordance an up to date LDP.
424. Within this context, the community facilities, retail, leisure (including the hotel offer) and business offers associated with the mixed use scheme are consistent with the key site requirements stipulated in the LDP and as such, the need for a sequential test is not considered to be necessary.

Noise and Air Pollution

425. Detail submitted with the application indicates that a Noise Impact and Air Quality Assessment have been undertaken as part of the Environmental Statement to examine the potential noise and air quality impacts of the proposed link road.
426. Paragraph 6.43 – 6.44 of the Environmental Statement acknowledges that the traffic generation associated with the proposed development has the potential to have an impact upon the surrounding air quality and noise assessment.
427. Noise and Air quality have been assessed in detail in chapters 7 and 8 of this Environmental Statement with confirmation provided that the traffic volumes used within these assessments have been calculated from the information included within the Transport Assessment provided for in Appendix 6.1 of the Statement.
428. The construction traffic associated with the proposed development could have a cumulative impact upon the surrounding highway network should construction phasing overlap with the construction phase of other committed developments within the vicinity of the site. However it is likely that this impact will be negligible as the proposed development is located adjacent to the strategic trunk road network (M1, A101 and A1) and construction of the road and the mixed use development can occur offline with the assistance of short term temporary traffic management.
429. Chapter 7 of the environmental statement advises that Noise and Vibration impacts were assessed. Measured noise levels were carried out at three locations to calculate typical levels. Predicted levels were also compared to guidance criteria to assess the suitability of the proposed sites for residential development, taking into account the potential noise impact of the proposed developments within the wider site Masterplan.
430. Chapter 5 of the Addendum report advises that an updated Noise Impact Assessment was carried out by Irwin Carr in light of amendments made to the Masterplan, in particular, the reconfiguration from industry to a mixed use community core with housing to the west and retail/local shops to the east at the Moira Road/northern gateway to the site.

431. Paragraph 5.5 of the addendum statement advises that it has been demonstrated that the amended Masterplan results in a reduction of noise levels at a number of receptor, in particular existing properties located at Moira Road and that there is no increase in predict noise levels at any properties as a result of amendments.
432. The Council's Environmental Health Unit in a response dated 17 December 2019 confirmed that chapters relating to Soils, Water and Contaminated Land, Noise and Vibration and Air Quality had been reviewed.
433. Advice is provided in relation to the need for specific parameters to be used an a detailed noise impact assessment at the subsequent planning application stage and that the report must include any proposed remediation measures as necessary and detail which rooms, dwellings and areas they are applicable too. The noise impact assessment should also include an Acoustic Design Statement.
434. Chapter 8 of the environmental statement assess the potential air quality impacts as a result of the proposed development.
435. Using existing background air quality dates and estimated traffic flows, the predicted pollutant concentrations at existing and proposed residential dwelling in proximity to the proposed link word, with and without the proposed link road in operation could be calculated.
436. When compared with relevant limits, the assessment predicts that the annual mean levels of identified pollutants will not be exceeded at the dwellings in proximity or within the proposed mixed use development.
437. Chapter 6 of the addendum statement advises that no reassessment of Air Quality was considered necessary as a result of the amendments made to the Masterplan layout.
438. Paragraph 6.4 states that the reduction in commercial floor space and changes to the land use breakdown have been re-examined in relation to potential trip generation. It notes that while there is a reduction in PM peak flows as a result of the amended proposal, the annual average daily traffic flows do not change and as such, the air quality conclusions of the original ES remain valid.
439. The Councils Environmental Health Unit in a response dated 17 December 2019 noted that an assessment had been undertaken to determine the air quality impacts. The response noted that details for the mixed use development were limited by virtue of it being outline and as such, the response recommended that the potential environmental impact should be assessed using IAQM guidance as the subsequent application stage.
440. The response from Environmental Health notes that the predicted air quality pollutant concentration results have been compared with the relevant Air

Quality objectives and advise that it is not anticipated that the air quality objectives will be exceeded for any relevant receptor within the development.

441. The Council's Environmental Health Unit in a response dated 20 August 2020 in respect of the Link Road, confirmed that they were content with the proposed development in principle subject to conditions.
442. Based on the detail contained within the environmental statement, the proposed mitigation and advice from Environmental Health, it is considered that the proposed development will not present any significant impacts with regard to Noise and Air Quality.

Contaminated Land

443. Paragraph 3.6 of the SPPS emphasises that identifying previously developed land within settlements including sites which may have environmental constraints (e.g. land contamination), can assist with the return to productive use of vacant or underused land. This can help deliver more attractive environments, assist with economic regeneration and renewal, and reduce the need for green field development.
444. It continues at 6.321 to state when decision-taking important considerations will include: the types of waste to be deposited or treated and the proposed method of disposal; impacts on human health and the environment (including environmental pollution).
445. Chapter 10 of the environmental statement sets out in detail the findings of the intrusive site investigations carried out in respect of the proposed developments.
446. The investigations identified that the ground conditions at the site are predominantly natural ground with only one area of the site identified as contained and made-ground/infill. This area is identified as relating to a portion of land within the farm in the northern portion of the site – the lands appeared visually impacted by oils/hydrocarbons.
447. Detailed soil and groundwater analysis indicated, in general, very low compound concentrations across the site. The only area to indicate any significant impact related to the farm area referred to above. A remediation strategy is development to address the identity human health pollutant linkages.
448. Chapter 8 of the Addendum statement advises at paragraph 8.7 that there is no significant change in the level of risk previously determinate as a result of the amended Masterplan and as such, previous remediation measures remain valid.
449. The Council's Environmental Health Unit in a response dated 17 December 2019 noted that a Generic Qualitative Risk Assessment have been undertaken

and that the conceptual site model has indicated a number of potentially unacceptable pollution linkages at the site which require remediation. The response confirms that they are content with the proposed development in principle subject to conditions aimed at ensuring that the risk from land contamination to the future users of the land and neighbouring lands are minimised.

450. The Land Soil and Air unit within the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) advised in a response received on 15 January 2019 that they had no objections to the mixed use development subject to conditions.
451. Based on the information provided, it is accepted that the risks of contamination from both the construction of the link road and mixed use development, will be low and as such, no mitigation is necessary.

Climate Change

452. Paragraph 3.10 of the SPPS states that a central challenge in furthering sustainable development is mitigating and adapting to climate change whilst improving air quality.
453. Paragraph 3.12 states that the development and publication of strategic policy fulfils a DoE commitment in the adaption programme to identify and implement opportunities to build resilience into the built and natural environment and to develop and implement sustainable strategies to explore and manage significant flood risk.
454. Strategic policy advises at paragraph 3.13 that the planning system should help to mitigate and adapt to climate change by:
- shaping new and existing developments in ways that reduce greenhouse gas emissions and positively build community resilience to problems such as extreme heat or flood risk;
 - promoting sustainable patterns of development, including the sustainable reuse of historic buildings where appropriate, which reduces the need for motorised transport, encourages active travel, and facilitates travel by public transport in preference to the private car;
 - requiring the siting, design and layout of all new development to limit likely greenhouse gas emissions and minimise resource and energy requirements;
 - avoiding development in areas with increased vulnerability to the effects of climate change, particularly areas at significant risk from flooding, landslip 14 and coastal erosion and highly exposed sites at significant risk from impacts of storms;

- considering the energy and heat requirements of new developments when designating land for new residential, commercial and industrial development and making use of opportunities for energy and power sharing, or for decentralised or low carbon sources of heat and power wherever possible;
 - promoting the use of energy efficient, micro-generating and decentralised renewable energy systems; and
 - working with natural environmental processes, for example through promoting the development of green infrastructure and also the use of sustainable drainage systems (SuDs) to reduce flood risk and improve water quality.
455. Chapter 15 of the Environmental Statement provides an assessment of the potential impacts on climate change and potential impacts due to climate change.
456. The assessment of greenhouse gas emissions considered the embodied carbon in construction material and the electricity and fuel use of domestic and non-domestic buildings in operation.
457. A range of mitigation measures were recommended for consideration at the detail design through the use of :
- SuDs as opposed to impermeable run off areas;
 - Maximise landscaping corridor around the River lagan for semi-natural flood resilience;
 - planting species and designs landscaping designs that are suitably resilient or adaptable to climate change;
 - carefully designed and constructed buildings both commercial and residential particularly in the area of thermal comfort and water demand;
 - use of innovative design or materials and making use of green infrastructure for shading or cooling;
 - design of on-site utilities for resilience i.e. undergrounding cables to protect from storm damage, siting infrastructure to provide flood protection and providing good emergency access for substations, mobile base stations etc..
458. The assessment concluded that with implementation of mitigation, there was potential for a beneficial residual effect, in that the development could be designed to provide housing and employment land uses with sustainable measures exceeding policy expectations and reducing greenhouse gas emissions.
459. Chapter 13 of the Addendum Statement makes reference to recent changes in climate policy particularly the adoption of a net zero carbon target for the UK by 2050 and changes in climate projections data.

460. Paragraph 13.7 of the addendum statement advises that the quantum of employment use floorspace in the amended Masterplan has decreased by approximately 2% and as such are considered to have no material effect on the estimated total greenhouse gas emissions.
461. The assessments conclude that there will not be an unacceptable climate change impact.

Conclusion

462. This decision is finely balanced. The mixed use development of this is contrary to the extant local development plan and draft plan designation in that it proposes housing on land designated for employment/industry as a major employment location and outside the proposed settlement limit of Lisburn.
463. However BMAP is still not adopted and the question still continues to be asked as to whether an employment zoning can be sustained at West Lisburn. It is accepted that the rationale offered by the Commission for protecting the land for employment was valid at the time.
464. The findings of the Inquiry report are however almost ten years old and the potential of the land has not been realised. There is no evidence available in line with the advice detailed in the Inquiry report to conclude that other large housing schemes contributed or were required to contribute to the funding of the Knockmore Link Road.
465. The latest revision of the RDS retains West Lisburn (Blaris) as a location for major employment important to Northern Ireland as a region. The infrastructure necessary to unlock the potential of the land is not supported in a Plan and the Knockmore Link road is still regarded by the Department as a developer led road scheme.
466. There is an obvious tension between the ambition for West Lisburn as set out in the RDS and the direction offered in the draft Plan as to how this ambition might be realised.
467. The weight to be afforded to the extant and emerging draft plan must be considered against the other material considerations that are presented now and that take account of the passage of time.
468. In the absence of continued interest in the land it is considered that significant material weight is given to the updated evidence which describes the economic benefits that might be accrued from bringing forward mixed use development on the land linked to the delivery of the Knockmore Link road and which must be considered in the context of **no** jobs (my emphasis) having been created in the previous ten years.

469. Whilst the WLDF is a non-statutory document, it is material to the decision making process. In an analysis undertaken by Oxford Economics on behalf of the Council and used to inform the preparation of the framework it was indicated that the mixed use development of this land could generate 3,500 employment-class jobs.
470. In addition, Oxford Economics forecasted that the additional spending by new residents will generate 1,300 jobs across the Council area together with a further 1,600 indirect and induced jobs.
471. Whilst many of these jobs will only follow occupation of the new homes, this analysis does point to the significant economic contribution of this scale of development. It also reduces any argument regarding the need for all of the site to be zoned for employment purposes.
472. That said it is also accepted there is no direct alignment between the geographical extent of the study area for the WLDF and this planning application.
473. The ability to secure the level of employment suggested in the Oxford Economics analysis is predicated on at least 50% of the Blaris lands (as identified in draft BMAP) being available for employment use.
474. As stated above approximately 65% of the application site is for uses other than employment. The challenge for the Council in permitting the loss of this amount of land is whether it will assist in the future in realising the full employment potential of the balance of the land by putting in place the necessary road infrastructure.
475. Approximately 50% of the total employment zoning as envisaged in draft BMAP will remain available (excluding the land in the open countryside beyond) to realise the number of jobs projected in the Oxford Economics analysis.
476. The planning applicant has assembled the necessary land to construct the Knockmore Link Road, brought forward a detailed design for the road in a parallel application and a phasing plan that indicates the road will be constructed in parallel with some of the mixed use development as a first phase of development.
477. This is a significant material consideration in realising the full potential of West Lisburn as a strategic location for employment and it is of equally importance not to undermine further the RDS policy direction in respect of West Lisburn.
478. The concept plan submitted shows how the proposed housing north of the Blaris Road might be extended into the neighbouring lands. The concept only relates to the application site and is without prejudice to what might come forward on the balance of the lands.

479. The developer chose not to bring forward a framework for all the West Lisburn (Blaris) zoning and has asked for this proposal to be considered on its own merits.
480. It is considered that the balance of the land could still be developed for employment with suitable mitigation in the form of a buffer which provides clear segregation between the neighbouring uses. The housing in the application site is supported by all the necessary transport infrastructure, neighbour facilities and open spaces.
481. It could be regarded that the scheme as proposed is an 'urban village' sitting next to an area of major employment where there is ease of access to future employment opportunity without the need to commute long distances.
482. The concept does **not** prejudice the future development of the West Lisburn (Blaris) land for employment.
483. The weight to be afforded to the monetary contribution that this proposal makes to the local economy in terms of economic benefit is treated with caution and not attached significant weight.
484. In general terms however it is accepted that the development of West Lisburn (Blaris) and the wider land is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for the council area and surrounding region.
485. Beyond the economic impact described the location of new and additional employment opportunities of scale at West Lisburn (Blaris), has the potential to generate a positive local environmental dividend in Lisburn by reducing the need for individuals to commute outside the council area for employment.
486. The proximity of the site to known areas of deprivation within the council area and to North and West Belfast (two areas of high unemployment), and the enhanced connectivity proposed by the Knockmore M1 Link Road to the motorway network and the Knockmore Rail Halt to the railway network, means that the employment generated at West Lisburn (Blaris) has the potential to provide positive economic impact not just in Lisburn Castlereagh, but in the wider region and beyond.
487. There is no doubt that the construction of the Knockmore Link Road is key to unlocking the economic development potential of West Lisburn (Blaris).
488. However a clear strategy as to how the West Lisburn (Blaris) site is required looking forward as to how higher value added commercial land use is secured on this and neighbouring land, that would complement, for example, the RUAS agri-food, agri-tech ambitions for Maze Long Kesh, the digital agenda espoused by Belfast Region City Deal or the UK Industrial Strategy.
489. The road gives the Knockmore Hill, Lissue and Ballinderry Road Industrial Estates direct access to the strategic road network.

490. The Knockmore Link road and orbital bus services will provide increased accessibility to employment opportunity socially disadvantaged communities in Lisburn City and beyond. A £500,000 contribution to Translink to realise the orbital bus service is weighed as significant.
491. The significance of the proposal in terms of unlocking the potential of the strategic land reserve at the Maze Long Kesh is also recognised.
492. The continued development of land at the Maze amongst other things as a major centre for tourism in terms of operation of the Eikon exhibition centre by the RUAS and the operation of the aviation museum by the Ulster Aviation Society are constrained by the absence of a link to the strategic road network.
493. This is necessary infrastructure and the road as designed allows for this link to be realised in the future and provides impetus for a master plan to come forward for the balance of the land reserve at the Maze.
494. The proposed affordable housing provision at 10% (and not provided for in current policy) will assist in meeting a continued and pressing need in Lisburn City.
495. Whilst no detail is provided at this stage, there is scope for the proposal to create a quality residential environment incorporating a mix of house types including detached, semi-detached, terrace dwellings and apartments in accordance with the requirements of the SPPS and policy QD 1 of PPS7 without adversely impacting on the character of the area or have a detrimental impact on the amenity of existing residents in properties adjoining the site.
496. It is considered that the link road and mixed use development comply with the SPPS and PPS 2 in that the environmental information submitted in support of the application demonstrates that it will give rise to no significant adverse effects on habitats or species of ecological or nature conservation value, the proposed development is unlikely to result in any cumulative impact upon these features when considered alone or as demonstrated by way of separate report in combination with the associated link road scheme.
497. The proposal complies with the SPPS and PPS3 in that the proposed link road development and associated internal road works will create an accessible environment for everyone and that the access arrangements proposed to the public road and the creation new accesses to a public road will not prejudice road safety or significantly inconvenience the flow of traffic; nor will the proposal conflict with tests associated with Policy AMP 3 – Access to Protected Routes.
498. Furthermore, the Transport Assessment has allowed for the transport implications of the link road development on the surrounding road network to be evaluated.
499. With regard to environmental effects associated with transport issues the Environmental Statement and associated Addendum demonstrate that the

traffic impacts associated with the proposed link road development is sufficient to address the impacts of the proposed mixed use development on the surrounding road network.

500. It also demonstrates that the proposed development has been designed to encourage sustainable modes of transport and that public transport facilities, that the use of public transport will be promoted and implemented through Translink incentives and that it will significantly improve traffic progression through Lisburn City Centre, provide a direct link to the strategic road network for the west of Lisburn and in doing so, create the opportunity for orbital bus services to connect to the existing radial services.
501. The proposed development complies with the SPPS and PPS 6 in that the information submitted demonstrates that there are no known archaeological heritage assets mapped within the footprint of the proposed link road development.
502. It is accepted that standard mitigation measures in relation to a programme of archaeological works as outlined will reduce the significance of effect on the buried archaeological resource to neutral.
503. The proposal is considered to comply with the SPPS and the policy tests associated with PPS 15 in that the proposed link road does present an exception in accordance with criteria (d) in that it is development in respect of transport infrastructure, which for operational reasons has to be located within the flood plain. It is also seen the delivery of a non-strategic road in accordance with a protected line designated within the local development plan.
504. Furthermore, the evidence submitted with both applications demonstrates that the development will not impede the operational effectiveness of any flood defence or drainage infrastructure or hind access for maintenance. That said, given the nature and scale of the proposed development, it is recommended that detailed drainage design information is provided for further consideration at each of the respective reserved matters stages.
505. In terms of drainage, the drainage strategy to discharge Greenfield runoff from the proposed road to the adjacent watercourses and the provision of storage in the form of attenuation ponds and oversized pipes is considered to be acceptable.
506. With regard to the mixed use element, advice confirms that a public water supply and foul sewer within 20 metres of the proposed site. That said, existing pressures within the existing network requires the submission of a solution for the disposal and treatment of foul sewage discharge from the proposal to be submitted and agreed in writing at reserved matters stage
507. Based on the detail contained within the environmental statement, the proposed mitigation and advice from Environmental Health, it is considered that

the proposed development complies with the SPPS in that it will not present any significant impacts with regard to Noise and Air Quality.

508. Based on the information provided, it is accepted that the development complies with the SPPS in that the risks of contamination from both the construction of the link road and mixed use development will be low and as such, no mitigation is necessary.

Recommendation

509. The application is presented with a recommendation to approve subject to conditions outlined and Section 76 planning agreement requiring the developer

- to inform the Council when development will be commenced;
- to fund the link road on the basis of a mixed use proposal comprised of no more than 1300 dwellings and 754,000 square metres of business and other commercial floor space;
- to carry out the development in accordance with the proposed phasing plan to ensure that the employment component of the mixed use scheme is delivered in parallel with the residential development;
- to submit to the Council for approval a strategy detailing how the land shown in the concept plan to be developed for employment will be promoted;
- to covenant with the Council to not prevent access to the proposed link road from other lands in West Lisburn (including the arm to Maze Long Kesh) for the purpose of securing the ambition of making West Lisburn a strategic location for employment growth;
- to provide 10% of the total number of proposed residential units as affordable housing;
- to covenant with the Council to meet its obligation to provide funding towards an orbital bus connection; and
- to maintain signalised junctions for a period of ten years.

Conditions

510. The following conditions are recommended:

1. As required by Section 62 of the Planning Act (Northern-Ireland) 2011, application for approval of the reserved matters shall be made to the Council within 3 years of the date on which this permission is granted and the development, hereby permitted, shall be begun by whichever is the later of the following dates:-
 - i. the expiration of 5 years from the date of this permission; or
 - ii. the expiration of 2 years from the date of approval of the last of the reserved matters to be approved.

Reason: Time Limit

2. Approval of the details of the siting, design and external appearance of the buildings, the means of access thereto and the landscaping of the site (hereinafter called "the reserved matters"), shall be obtained from the Council, in writing, before any development is commenced.
Reason: To enable the Council to consider in detail the proposed development of the site.

3. Unless otherwise agreed by Council at Reserved Matters or Full stage, no part of the development hereby permitted shall become operational until the 'spine road' has been constructed to the satisfaction of the Council. This will be generally in accordance with the approval LA05/2018/1155/F 'Construction of a new link road (1.6 km) connecting the existing M1 junction 8/A101 roundabout to existing Moira / Knockmore Road Junction as shown on Drawing No 04A 'IBH 0544/1000 A' 'Proposed Overall Layout' published by LCCC on 15 November 2019.
Reason: To ensure there is a satisfactory means of access in the interests of road safety and the convenience of road users.

4. At Reserved Matters Stage a detailed Phasing Plan will be submitted identifying the order and priority of construction of the realignment of the Blaris Road and all distributor roads.
Reason: To ensure orderly development in the interests of road safety and the convenience of road users.

5. At Reserved Matters Stage parking and servicing shall be in accordance with the requirements of the Department's current published Parking Standards unless otherwise agree with the Council .
Reason: To ensure the provision of adequate parking facilities to meet the needs of the development and in the interests of road safety and the convenience of road users.

6. Unless otherwise approved by Council at Reserved Matters or Full stage, the development hereby permitted shall operate generally in accordance with the approved Draft Site Wide Residential Travel Plan within Appendix 4.1 of the Transport Assessment Addendum published by Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council Planning Office on 14 November 2019.

Each element, as it comes forward at Reserved Matters or Full Application stage, will have a site specific Plan based on the Draft Plan. This shall include provision of the Translink iLink Initiative and the Bike2Work Initiative or equivalent measures agreed by DfI Roads. This Residential Travel Plan will be issued as a standalone document for each element of the proposal as it is constructed and occupied and the measures contained within will be monitored and assessed from the inception of the Plan on a minimum of an annual basis to ensure the Plan's effectiveness.

Reason: To encourage the use of alternative modes of transport to the private car in accordance with the Transportation Principles.

7. The commercial elements of the development hereby permitted shall operate in accordance with a Travel Plan approved by the Council at Reserved Matters or Full stage. This shall include provision of the Translink iLink Initiative and the Bike2Work Initiative or equivalent measures agreed by DfI Roads. This Travel Plan will be issued as a standalone document for each element of the proposal as it is constructed and occupied and the measures contained within will be monitored and assessed from the inception of the Plan on a minimum of an annual basis to ensure the Plan's effectiveness.

Reason: To encourage the use of alternative modes of transport to the private car in accordance with the Transportation Principles.
8. The commercial elements of the development hereby permitted shall operate in accordance with a Service Management Plan approved by the Council at Reserved Matters or Full stage. This Service Management Plan will be issued as a standalone document for each element of the proposal as it is constructed and.

Reason: In the interests of road safety and the convenience of road users.
9. Unless otherwise approved by the Council at Reserved Matters or Full stage, secure cycle parking stands, at a ratio of approximately 1 per 300 m² commercial floor space, shall be provided and permanently retained within and/or close to the accesses of the proposed developments for use by staff and visitors to the development.

Reason: to encourage the use of alternative modes of transport for development users.
10. The development hereby permitted shall ensure that the site provides all appropriate linkages to the cycle network.

Reason: to encourage the use of alternative modes of transport for development users.
11. A detailed programme of works and associated traffic management proposals shall be submitted to and approved by the Council, prior to the commencement of any element of road works.

Reason: To facilitate the convenient movement of all road users and the orderly progress of work in the interests of road safety.
12. No development activity shall take place until a Bat Mitigation Plan (BMP) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Council. The approved BMP shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details and all works on site shall conform to the approved BMP, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Council. The BMP shall include the following:

 - Details of the provision of alternative roosting locations for bats, including the number,

- model, specifications and location (including height and aspect) of bat boxes;
- Details of the timing of works and the implementation of mitigation measures;
- Details of any artificial lighting proposed for the exterior of the site;
- Details of updated bat surveys prior to any demolition works commencing and the development of any additional mitigation measures should bats be found;
- Details of the appointment of a suitably qualified and experienced bat ecologist to oversee all works and the implementation of mitigation measures.

Reason: To mitigate for impacts on bats using the site.

13. No site works of any nature or development shall take place until a programme of archaeological work has been implemented, in accordance with a written scheme and programme prepared by a qualified archaeologist, submitted by the applicant and approved by the Council. The programme should provide for the identification and evaluation of archaeological remains within the site, for mitigation of the impacts of development, through excavation recording or by preservation of remains, and for preparation of an archaeological report.

Reason: to ensure that archaeological remains within the application site are properly identified, and protected or appropriately recorded.

14. Access shall be afforded to the site at all reasonable times to any archaeologist nominated by the Council in consultation with the Department for Communities – Historic Environment Division to observe the operations and to monitor the implementation of archaeological requirements.

Reason: to monitor programmed works in order to ensure that identification, evaluation and appropriate recording of any archaeological remains, or any other specific work required by condition, or agreement is satisfactorily completed.

15. A detailed landscaping scheme shall be submitted to the Council for approval at Reserved Matters stage providing for species, siting, planting distances, presentation and programme of planting. It shall include indications of all existing trees and hedgerows on the land together with details of any to be retained and measures for their protection during the course of the development.

Reason: To ensure the continuity of amenity afforded by existing trees, and the provision, establishment and maintenance of a high standard of landscape.

16. The appointed contractor to the project must submit a detailed final Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) for approval of the Council Planning Department prior to commencement of construction. This CEMP to include all the avoidance and mitigation methodologies in the outline CEMP and protection of the water environment advice from NIEA WMU on the proposal.

Reason: To ensure no adverse effects on the European Sites hydrologically connected to the proposal site.

17. At the subsequent reserved matters a noise impact assessment should be submitted to and agreed by the Council. The noise impact assessment should assess the potential noise impact at the proposed and relevant existing dwellings as a result of the proposed development and any relevant new or existing road. This assessment should be undertaken using any relevant guidance including ProPG, BS4142, BS8233 and BS5228. The assessment should detail the location, class use and details relating to the proposed commercial and industrial premises. Where loss in amenity is likely this should be assessment and any appropriate mitigation measures proposed. Where noise modelling is undertaken details should be provided.

Reason: To protect the amenity of neighbouring dwellings with respect to noise

18. At the subsequent reserved matters stage a detailed remediation scheme must be submitted to and approved by the Council. The remediation scheme shall detail how the unacceptable risks to human health will be removed to bring the site to a condition suitable for the intended use. The scheme must include all works to be undertaken, proposed remediation objectives and remediation criteria, timetable of works and site management procedures.

Reason: To ensure that risks from land contamination to the future users of the land and neighbouring land are minimised, and to ensure that the development can be carried out safely without unacceptable risks to workers, neighbours and other offsite receptors

19. At the subsequent reserved matters application stage an odour risk assessment should be submitted to and agreed by the planning authority. The report should identify all relevant odour sources e.g. industrial or food premises, determine the odour impact at any relevant receptor and the level of odour control required. Where odour mitigation measures are necessary an annotated drawing of the proposal to illustrate the location of any proposed odour abatement equipment and the extraction system. Details should be provided of the odour control measures to demonstrate that they meet the required level of odour control. This assessment shall be completed in line with the EMAQ document entitled 'Control of Odour and Noise from Commercial Kitchen Exhaust Systems'.

Reason: To protect the amenity of neighbouring dwellings with respect to odour and noise

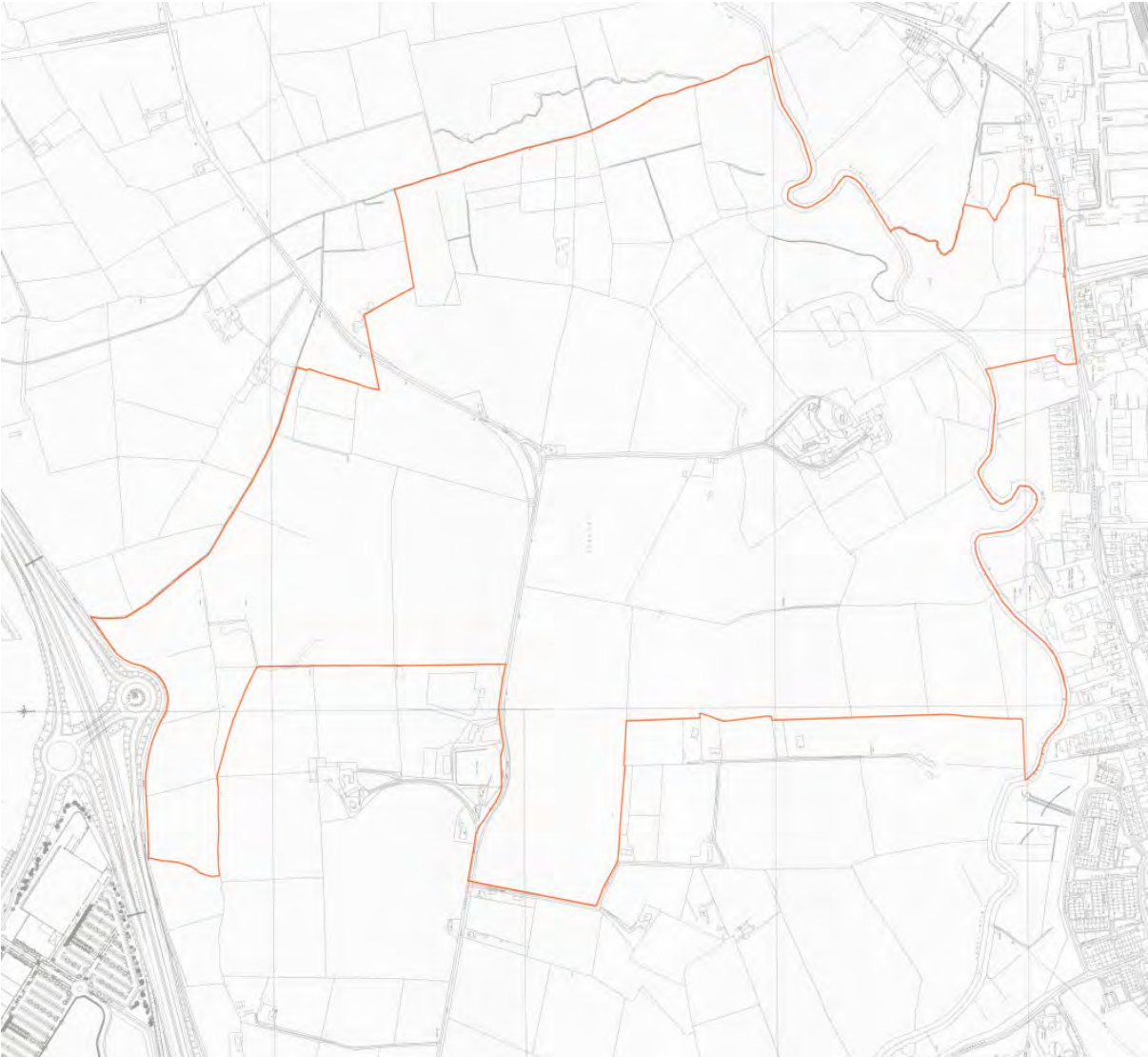
20. At the subsequent reserved matters application stage a light impact assessment shall be submitted to and agreed by the planning authority. The assessment should consider the impact on the living conditions of any relevant receptors with respect to light. This assessment shall be undertaken in accordance with relevant standards including Institute of Light Engineers' Guidance Notes for the Reduction of Obtrusive Lighting, GN01 (2011) and should include illuminance plots to demonstrate the

vertical illuminance at any appropriate sensitive receptors and topographical information.

Reason: To protect the amenity of neighbouring dwellings with respect to light

21. At the subsequent reserved matters application stage a dust risk assessment should be submitted to and agreed by the planning authority. The assessment should detail the dust management plan, dust mitigation measures and monitoring procedures to be implemented for the duration of the construction related work. This plan should be undertaken in accordance with any relevant standards and guidance including the Institute of Air Quality Management's Guidance on the assessment of dust from demolition and construction (2014).
Reason: To protect the amenity of neighbouring dwellings
22. At Reserved Matters Stage, detailed plans for the disposal and treatment of foul sewage discharge from this proposal must be agreed and approved by the planning authority.
Reason: In the interests of public Health
23. At Reserved Matters, a detailed drainage assessment must be provided for each stage or phase of the mixed use development regardless of size, number of dwellings or area of impermeable surface. This should be supported by detailed drainage drawings for each phase of development.
Reason: To reduce the risk of flooding to the site and from the site to elsewhere.

Site Location Plan – LA05/2018/1154/O



Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council

Council/Committee	Planning Committee
Date of Committee Meeting	12 April 2021
Committee Interest	Major Application
Application Reference(s)	LA05/2018/1155/F
Date of Application(s)	12 November 2018
District Electoral Area	Downshire West
Proposal Description	Construction of a new link road (1.6km) connecting the existing M1 junction 8/A101 roundabout to existing Moira/Knockmore Road Junction
Location	Lands at Blaris Lisburn (lands between existing M1 junction 8/A101 roundabout and Moira Road/Knockmore Road junction)
Representations	Four
Recommendation	Approval

Summary of Recommendation

1. This application is categorised as a major planning application in accordance with the Development Management Regulations 2015 in that the development relates to land more than two hectares.
2. Significant material weight is afforded to the draft plan and PAC inquiry report which identified the proposed road as a developer led road scheme (proposal LC17).
3. The proposal satisfies the policy tests at paragraph 6.297 of the SPPS and key policy tests associated with PPS 3 in that that the proposed access arrangements to the public road and detailed design of the public road will not prejudice road safety or significantly inconvenience the flow of traffic.
4. The environmental impacts of the construction and operation of the road are addressed in the Environmental Statement and associated Addendum. It is demonstrated that the road has the capacity to operate without give rise to

significant adverse traffic impacts and without creating significant environmental effects.

5. It also demonstrated that the proposed development has been designed to support sustainable modes of transport and public transport facilities.
6. It allows for further improvement to the Sprucefield Park and Ride facility access from the motorway to the proposed Knockmore Rail Halt and the use of public transport will be promoted through Translink incentives to operate local bus connections into Lisburn City that will significantly improve traffic progression through Lisburn City Centre, provide a direct link to the strategic road network for the west of Lisburn and in doing so, create the opportunity for orbital bus services to connect to the existing radial services.
7. A pedestrian cycle way is also provided with access to the Sustrans cycle network.
8. The proposed development satisfies the policy tests at paragraph 6.172 of the SPPS and the key policy tests associate with PPS 2 in that the detail submitted demonstrates that the development of the link road will not harm a European protected species nor is it likely to have any significant adverse effect on the integrity, including the value of the site to the habitat network, or any natural feature of special interest.
9. With regard to the environmental impact on the ecology of the local and wider environment the Environmental Statement and associated Addendum demonstrated that the construction and operational impacts associated with the development of the proposed link road will not give rise to significant adverse effects on habitats or species of ecological or nature conservation value. The proposed development is unlikely to result in any cumulative impact upon these features when considered alone or in association with the development of the neighbouring lands.
10. The proposal complies with paragraph 6.4 of the SPPS and policy tests in PPS 6 in that the development of the link road will not adversely affect any archaeological sites or monuments which are of local importance including their settings.
11. With regard to environmental effects associated with the cultural heritage features identified the Environmental Statement and associated Addendum demonstrate that there are no known archaeological heritage assets mapped within the footprint of the proposed link road development that would be significantly impacted by the proposed development.
12. Furthermore, the standard mitigation measures proposed in the programme of archaeological works will reduce the significance of the effect on the buried archaeological assets to neutral.

13. The proposal is considered to comply with paragraph 6.104 of the SPPS and the policy tests in PPS 15 in that the proposed link road is an exception in accordance with criteria (d) of policy FLD1 in that this is transport infrastructure, which has to be located within the flood plain to connect to the existing road infrastructure.
14. Furthermore, the evidence submitted with the application demonstrates that the development will not impede the operational effectiveness of any flood defence or drainage infrastructure or hinder access for maintenance.
15. The drainage proposal to discharge storm run-off at greenfield rates to the adjacent watercourse and the provision of storage in the form of attenuation ponds and oversized pipes is considered to be acceptable.
16. With regard to environmental hydrology and drainage impacts of the proposed road, the Environmental Statement and associated Addendum demonstrate that the environmental risk of flooding from a drainage aspect can be effectively controlled and mitigated so as not to create potential for surface water discharge to increase flooding elsewhere and that the proposed bridge minimises the impact of infilling land in the floodplain and is an acceptable flood mitigation measure.
17. The strategic economic benefits of the proposed link road as a result of its construction carry significant weight in the assessment of this application. The road gives the Knockmore Hill, Lissue and Ballinderry Road Industrial Estates direct access to the strategic road network.
18. It facilitates the development of West Lisburn (Blaris) as a place for major economic growth. The road is designed to allow future access to the Maze Long Kesh strategic land reserve and the major untapped tourism asset based around the assets cared for by the Ulster Aviation Society.
19. The road is a developer led proposal and linked to a proposal for mixed use development. Its construction is indicated to be in one contract the timing of its delivery must be secured by way of a planning agreement.

Description of Site and Surroundings

20. The application site is comprised of approximately 18 hectares of land that extends from the existing dumbbell roundabout at Junction 8 of the M1 at its southern boundary, crosses the Blaris Road, connecting to the Moira Road at its junction with the Knockmore Road to the north.
21. The land with the site following the road line (running south to north from the M1 Motorway) is mainly comprised of broadly level, irregularly shaped agricultural fields.

22. The Blaris Road runs east to west (parallel with the M1 Motorway) and intersects the proposed road approximately one third of the distance from the M1. There is an existing Park and Ride facility accessed from junction at the south eastern corner of the site. The proposed road crosses the River Lagan towards the northern boundary of the site
23. In the wider context, the land beyond the site and the River Lagan to the north is within the settlement limit of Lisburn and mainly in employment use. There is residential development at Knockmore and along the Ballinderry and Moira Roads to the north and northeast; cemeteries and residential development at Blaris to the east and agricultural land to the west.

Proposed Development

24. The application seeks approval for the construction of a new 1.6km link road connecting to the M1 at junction 8 and the Moira Road at the junction with the Knockmore Road Jon lands at Blaris, Lisburn.
25. The main components of the proposed link road are described as follows:
 - A 1.6 km relief road;
 - A new roundabout with a proposed arm to facilitate access to Maze Long Kesh in the future;
 - Signalised junctions at the three points along the road which provide pedestrian crossing facilities;
 - A 73m two span bridge over the River Lagan; and
 - Linear landscaped pedestrian cycleway, related infrastructure and ancillary works.
26. The application is submitted in parallel with an outline planning application for a proposed mixed use development at West Lisburn (Blaris).

Relevant Planning History

27. The relevant planning history associated with the application site and adjacent lands includes the following:

Application Reference	Description of Proposal	Decision
S/1998/0618	Comprehensive mixed development (to include retail food-store, retail warehousing, commercial leisure, vehicle showrooms and associated uses) together with Link Rd between A1 and M1, associated junctions, civil engineering and landscape works at Land at Sprucefield, bounded by and including A1 and M1 motorway.	Planning Permission Granted 22 March 2001
S/1999/1433/O	Construction of roundabout, underpass and slip roads on land directly north and south of M1 motorway Sprucefield Lisburn	Withdrawn
S/2001/1584/RM	Construction of link road between A1 and M1, slip roads and Dumbbell Roundabout, new roundabout on A1, associated improvements to sprucefield junction, civil engineering and ancillary works on Land at Sprucefield, Lisburn, bounded by the A1 Hillsborough Road and the M1 motorway	Planning Permission Granted 17 July 2002
S/2006/0443/O	Major mixed use urban extension to include: Business park, residential neighbourhood, retail, commercial and leisure uses, car showrooms, hotel and riverside restaurant & bar, primary school, community and social facilities, open space and landscaping, M1 Knockmore link road, and ancillary infrastructure.	Application withdrawn 05 June 2008
LA05/2018/1016/F	The development is for an asphalt surfaced car park, which shall be an extension to the existing Dfl park and ride site. The extension shall provide 132 additional car parking spaces. The scheme shall include new concrete kerbs and timber fencing. Additional street lighting shall be provided for the extension on lands north of junction 8 of the M1, including lands to the north and south of Blaris Road, lands west of Priests Lane and south of Moira Road/ Knockmore Road junction, Lisburn.	Planning Permission Granted 05 March 2019

Planning Policy Context

28. The relevant planning policy context which relates to the application is as follows:

- Regional Development Strategy (RDS) 2035
- Belfast Metropolitan Transport Plan (BMTP)
- Lisburn Area Plan 2001
- Draft Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan (BMAP) 2015;
- Strategic Planning Policy Statement for Northern Ireland (SPPS) - Planning for Sustainable Development
- Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 2 - Natural Heritage
- Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 3 - Access, Movement and Parking
- Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 15 – Planning and Flood Risk

29. The following non-statutory document is also relevant to the assessment of the application:
- West Lisburn Development Framework 2018 Review (published June 2019)

Consultations

30. The following consultations were carried out:

Consultee	Response
Council's Environmental Health	No Objection
Council's Economic Development Unit	No Objection
Historic Environment Division	No Objection
DAERA – Water Management Unit	No Objection
DAERA – Land, Soil and Air	No Objection
DAERA – Natural Heritage	No Objection
NI Water	No Objection
Shared Environmental Services	No Objection
DfI Roads	No Objection
DfI Rivers	No Objection

31. Members are advised that in a letter dated 14 January 2019 DfI Planning served a direction on the Council under the powers conferred on it by Articles 17 and 18 of the Planning (General Development Procedure) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015.
32. The direction prevents the Council from concluding the application process until the Department has an opportunity to assess whether the applications be referred to the Department for determination.

Representations

33. Two letters of objection have been submitted in respect of the proposal. The following issues have been raised:

- Noise Pollution
 - Impact of Traffic on road network
 - Impact on wildlife
 - Potential for flooding
 - Threat of Judicial Review
34. The issues that arise from the objections have been considered in more detail within the relevant sections below. However, none of the points of objection are of sufficient material weight to sustain a recommendation to refuse planning permission.
35. A letter of support recognises the benefits associated with the link road development in reducing pressures on the existing road network.
36. The impact to the existing road network has been considered and assessed. A careful balance between providing ease of access to the road network for commuters and the other transport benefits have been weighed. DfI Roads offer no objection to the proposal.

Planning Policy Context/Other Material Considerations

37. The main issues for to consider as part of the assessment of this application are:
- Environmental Impact Assessment
 - Pre-Application Community Consultation
 - Design and Access Statement
 - Regional Strategic Direction
 - Local Development Plan Context
 - Principle of Development
 - Access, Movement and Parking
 - Creating an Accessible Environment
 - Access to Public Roads
 - Transport Assessment
 - Environmental Information - Transport
 - Natural Heritage Interests
 - European and Ramsar Sites – International
 - Species protected by Law
 - Environmental Information – Ecology
 - Archaeology and Built Heritage
 - Protection of Archaeological remains of local importance and their settings
 - Archaeological Assessment and Evaluation
 - Archaeological Mitigation
 - Environmental Information - Cultural
 - Planning and Flood Risk

- Development in Fluvial (River) and Coastal Flood Plains
- Protection of Flood Defence and Drainage Infrastructure
- Development and Surface Water Flood Risk Outside Flood Plains
- Artificial modification of watercourses
- Development in Proximity to Reservoirs
- Environmental Information – Hydrology and Drainage
- Noise Vibration and Air Quality
- Air Quality
- Contaminated Land
- Landscape and Visual
- Other Material Considerations
 - Economic Benefits
 - Phasing

38. The following documents are provided in support of the application:

- An Environmental Statement dated October 2018 and Addendum Statement dated October 2019;
- Supporting Planning Statement dated October 2018 and revised planning supporting statement dated October 2019;
- Design and Access Statement dated October 2018 and revised Design and Access Statement dated October 2019;
- Pre-Application Community Consultation (PACC) Report dated October 2018;
- Clarification Note (Flood Risk & Drainage Assessment) dated September 2020.

39. The revised design and access statement dated October 2020 is submitted to respond to representations and feedback received from statutory and non-statutory consultees to the planning application process.

Environmental Impact

40. The proposal development would fall within Category 10 (f) - urban development projects of Schedule 2 of the Planning 'Environmental Impact Assessment' (EIA) Regulations (NI) 2017.
41. Under this category, an EIA is required for the carrying out of development to provide urban development projects where the area of the development exceeds 1 hectare.
42. In this case the application proposes the development of a corridor of land some 80 metres wide and approximately 1.6 kilometres long with a land take approximately of 18 hectares.

43. An Environment Statement dated October 2018 was volunteered in support of the application. The statement deals with the likely environmental impacts that the proposed link road infrastructure may give rise to and the significance of any effects on:
- Population
 - Transportation
 - Noise and Vibration
 - Air Quality
 - Ecology
 - Soils, Water and Contaminated Land
 - Hydrology and Drainage
 - Landscape and Visual
 - Cultural Heritage
44. These matters are addressed in the respective planning policy sections set out in the main body of this report.

Pre-Application Community Consultation

45. The issues identified through the consultation process and highlighted in the associated pre-application community consultation (PACC) report are summarised as follows:
- Masterplan Vs Proposed Application
 - Timescale for Development
 - Link Road Delivery
 - Implications for Knockmore Road/Other Junctions
 - Implications for Knockmore Ballinderry Road Junction
 - Implications for Knockmore Road/Prince William Road Junction
 - Implications for Ballymacash Road/Prince William Road Junction
 - M1 Traffic
 - Traffic Management
 - Social Housing
 - School Provision
 - Separation Distance to Proposed Housing
 - Alternative of MLK site
 - Movement Patterns
 - Flooding
 - Masonic Hall
 - Neighbourhood Facilities
46. The PACC advises at paragraph 66 that the feedback from the first public information events in 2017 allowed for a further review of the concept master plan to be carried out and for a response to be provided in relation to the following site specific issues:
- Review access into the mixed use zonings east and west of the link road at its Moira Road/Knockmore Road junction;

- Review the location and extent of the Park and Ride onsite which is now proposed to be expanded at its existing location adjacent to the M1 ;
- Review the potential of the proposed residential lands to the east of the application red line boundary at the northern end of Priests Lane to reflect the extent of the floodplain and a more appropriate extent of green corridor linking to River Park; and
- Review the proposed locations of SuDS ponds and relationships with existing Masonic Hall.

Design and Access Considerations

47. The statutory provision which set out the requirements for a Design and Access Statement (D&AS) are found in the 2011 Act and The Planning (General Development Procedure) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015 (GPDO).
48. An application which is a major development is required to be accompanied by a D&AS.
49. Article 6(4) of the GDPO provides a number of exemptions whereby a D&AS is not required. One such exemption is for engineering or mining operations.
50. The construction of the Knockmore Link Road is considered to be an engineering operation but a D&AS (last updated in October 2019) is volunteered by the applicant in support of the application in response to representations received by the Council
51. The D&AS does provide a useful reference in that it addresses in detail the physical constraints and engineering principles which influenced the design. It also provides details of a sustainability assessment, and landscape design and outlines the economic benefits that result from the proposal.

Regional Development Strategy

52. The Regional Development Strategy (RDS) 2035 was published in 2010. It is the spatial strategy of the Stormont Executive and it seeks to deliver the spatial aspects of the Programme for Government (PfG) whilst providing a strategic context for where development should happen.
53. The Regional Strategy promotes the need for strong and vibrant cities driving much of the economic growth. It also places a focus on larger urban centres and regional gateways to take advantage of their locations on the regional transport network whilst confirming the importance of having strong and vibrant cities to ensure that the wider region is successful.

54. Policy RG2 requires a balanced approach to the delivery of transport infrastructure that improves connectivity. It states that the capacity of road space can be increased by moving people in a more efficient way and by providing more attractive transport choices. This will improve access to our cities, towns and rural areas.
55. Policy RG7 supports urban and rural renaissance. It is stated that many places do not offer the quality of facilities required to meet the needs of local people. Urban renaissance is the process of development and redevelopment in urban areas to attract investment and activity, foster revitalisation and improve the mix of uses.
56. It acknowledges that development is dependent upon the availability of necessary infrastructure, including water and sewerage infrastructure but should avoid, where possible, areas that are at risk of flooding from rivers, the sea or surface water run-off.
57. SFG1 acknowledges that Lisburn is strategically located at the meeting of key transport corridors and has high development potential and the scope to generate additional jobs.

Local Development Plan

58. Section 6(4) of the Planning Act (NI) 2011 requires that in making a determination on planning applications regard must be had to the requirements of the local development plan and that determination of applications must be in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
59. On 18 May 2017, the Court of Appeal ruled that the purportedly adopted Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan (BMAP) 2015 had in its entirety not been lawfully adopted.
60. As a consequence of this decision, the Lisburn Area Plan (LAP) 2001 is the statutory development plan for the area, however, draft BMAP remains a material consideration.
61. The LAP identifies the site associated with the link road as being outside the settlement limit of Lisburn and in the open countryside.
62. Draft BMAP identifies the line of a road running from junction 8 of the M1 to the Moira Road at the junction with Knockmore Road as the settlement limit of Lisburn.
63. Within draft BMAP, Proposal LC 17 identifies the Knockmore – M1 link as a non-strategic road scheme. The draft plan recognises that the Knockmore link will provide access to major employment location at west Lisburn as identified within the RDS.

64. The draft Plan also acknowledges that developer will be responsible for funding the scheme.
65. The significance of his road proposal translates into the adopted BMAP (albeit unlawful) as proposal LC17/02 – Knockmore – M1 Link.
66. In a recent publication the Chief Planner for Northern Ireland advised that for those planning authorities subject to draft BMAP, that the draft plan along with representations received to the draft plan and the PAC inquiry report **remain as material considerations** to be weighed by the decision-maker.
67. The Inquiry report recognised that the proposed M1 – Knockmore link road would provide direct access to the strategic highway network. The view was expressed that such prime locations were rare.
68. Significant material weight is afforded to the draft plan and PAC inquiry report which recommended no change to the plan in relation to the Road Proposal line associated with LC 17.
69. This proposal is consistent with the provision of the emerging local development plan in that it proposes a road to the standard required to facilitate the development of the neighbouring West Lisburn (Blaris) lands
70. The proposal does include an arm off a proposed roundabout close to junction 8 extending into the open countryside. This is intended for future access to the strategic land reserve at MLK. Whilst this was not envisaged in the local development plan this is weighed in the planning balance as a material consideration later in the report.

Principle of Development

71. The Strategic Planning Policy Statement (SPPS) published in September 2015 states that until the Council adopts the Plan Strategy for its new Local Development Plan there will be a transitional period in operation.
72. During this period, planning policy within existing retained documents and guidance will apply. Any conflict between the SPPS and policy retained under transitional arrangements must be resolved in favour of the provisions of the SPPS.
73. The SPPS states that planning authorities should be guided by the principle that sustainable development should be permitted, having regard to the local development plan and all other material considerations, unless the proposed development will cause demonstrable harm to interests of acknowledged importance.

74. Having considered the content of the SPPS against the retained policies set no distinguishable differences are found that should be reconciled in favour of the SPPS. The application therefore falls to be assessed against prevailing policy tests as outlined below.
75. Part of the proposed road remains in the open countryside and the requirements of policy CTY 1 of PPS21 apply to this part of the development.
76. It is stated in the policy that:

'There are a range of other types of non-residential development that may be acceptable in principle in the countryside, e.g. certain utilities or telecommunications development. Proposals for such development will continue to be considered in accordance with existing published planning policies.
77. The part of the road that is in the open countryside is assessed have regard to the requirements of PPS 3 as necessary infrastructure.

Access, Movement and Parking

78. The RDS reflects a strategic need for more sustainable transport. It also highlights a requirement to reduce our carbon footprint and facilitate mitigation and adaptation to climate change whilst improving air quality.
79. The RDS and new approach to regional transportation consider better integration between transport and land use as fundamental to progress in implementing the Executives target for reducing greenhouse gas emissions.
80. The Belfast Metropolitan Transport Plan (BMTP) proposals for Lisburn are consistent with the overall objective of developing a modern, integrated transport system for the Belfast Metropolitan Area (BMA) that supports the principles of sustainable development.
81. This plan notes that the construction of the M1-Knockmore Link Road to provide access to West Lisburn is included in the BMTP as a proposal that will directly support the planned expansion of Lisburn.
82. The SPPS recognises that the successful integration of transport and land uses is fundamental to the objective of furthering sustainable development and that planning has a vital contributing role for improving connectivity and promoting more sustainable patterns of transport and travel.
83. The regional strategic objectives for transportation and land use identified at paragraph 6.297 of the SPPS are as follows:

- promote sustainable patterns of development which reduce the need for motorised transport, encourages active travel, and facilitate travel by public transport in preference to the private car;
 - ensure accessibility for all, with the needs of people with disabilities and others whose mobility is impaired given particular consideration;
 - promote the provision of adequate facilities for cyclists in new development;
 - promote parking policies that will assist in reducing reliance on the private car and help tackle growing congestion;
 - protect routes required for new transport schemes including disused transport routes with potential for future reuse;
 - restrict the number of new accesses and control the level of use of existing accesses onto Protected Routes; and
 - promote road safety, in particular for pedestrians, cyclists and other vulnerable road users.
84. PPS 3 – Access, Movement and Parking sets out the policies for vehicular access and pedestrian access, transport assessments, the protection of transport routes and parking.
85. It forms an important element in the integration of transport and land use planning and it embodies the Government’s commitment to the provision of a modern, safe, sustainable transport system.

Creating an Accessible Environment

86. Policy AMP1 – Creating an Accessible Environment aims to create an accessible environment for everyone.
87. Section 3 of the Environmental Statement – Non Technical Summary (NTS) advises that road alignment and detailed specification of the M1-Knockmore link road has been informed by an understanding of the following:
- Extent of the River Lagan floodplain;
 - Retaining existing buildings on the wider site and ensuring appropriate distance of set back;
 - Connecting into the existing road network; and
 - Retention of mature landscaping within the designated Local Landscape Policy area adjacent to the northern portion of the road.
88. The Statement also advises that the alignment design includes five key junctions as follows:
- Initial tie into existing dumbbell roundabout at junction 8 of the M1 to include an access point to the existing Park and Ride site.
 - An initial internal, roundabout to the north of junction 8 to create a link to proposed employment uses and the future connection to a new road to Maze Long Kesh further west.

- A signalised junction where the MKLR crosses the existing Blaris Road to facilitate safe movement for pedestrians around the residential and commercial high street core of the wider new neighbourhood.
 - A second signal junction to the north of Blaris Road to create a further main access to the residential land north of Blaris Road and towards the River Park.
 - A tie in to the existing Knockmore Road / Moira Road signals and creation of a new fourth arm linking to the new bridge over the lagan.
89. The detail provided demonstrates how the scheme has been design in accordance with current design standards taking into account and expected vehicle and pedestrian usage.
90. Details of the Sustainability Assessment are provided for at section 5 of the revised Design and Access Statement dated October 2019 in relation Accessibility and Facilities.

Accessibility

91. Paragraph 5.1 explains that there are a range of regular services bus routes in and around Lisburn with existing bus stops located around the periphery of the application site. The proposed development provides opportunity to extend these routes through the site, facilitating circular town services.
92. Paragraph 5.2 notes that Lisburn Train Station lies on the Newry to Bangor railway line which provides approximately 50 services a day to and from Belfast. It explains that these services are more frequent around rush hour times.
93. Paragraph 5.4 explains that the M1 sites adjacent to the sites southern boundary and connects with Belfast to the north and Craigavon and Dungannon to the west. It also notes that the A1 provides direct connection with Dublin to the south.

Facilities

94. Paragraph 5.5 acknowledges that there are extensive industrial parks/areas of employment to the north of the site while to the south, Sprucefield provides an extensive retail offer. Lisburn City Centre, 2.5 km from the site, also provides a wide range of facilities with convenient transport links and existing bus services.
95. The view is expressed that these facilities can be strengthened to create an orbital bus route to connect these disparate through the application lands.
96. Section 7.0 of the D&AS deals with connectivity. It demonstrates how the road scheme provides walk/cycle connections both north-south and east-west, incorporates green network with significantly sized riverside parkland whilst connecting into the existing external road and system network.

97. Paragraph 7.2 explains that it is unlikely that there will be significant pedestrian activity to the south of the site (M1 Junction 8) with the main pedestrian desire line identified to be that to the north of the site (Moirra/Knockmore Road). The existing Moira Road/Knockmore Road junction is signalised with controlled pedestrian crossing on the Moira and Knockmore Roads to be retained as part of the proposal.

Access to Public Roads

98. Policy AMP 2 – Access to Public Roads states that planning permission will only be granted for a development proposal involving direct access, or the intensification of the use of an existing access, on to a public road where:
- (a) Such access will not prejudice road safety or significantly inconvenience the flow of traffic; and
 - (b) The proposal does not conflict with Policy AMP 3 – Access to Protected Routes.
99. Policy AMP 3 – Access to Protected Routes states that planning authorities will restrict the number of new access and control the level of use of existing accesses onto Protected Routes.
100. It also directs that planning permission will only be granted for a development proposal involving direct access, or the intensification of the use of an existing access
- (a) where access cannot reasonably be taken from an adjacent minor road; or
 - (b) in the case of proposals involving residential development, it is demonstrated to the planning authority's satisfaction that the nature and level of access onto the Protected Route will significantly assist in the creation of a quality environment without compromising standards of road safety or resulting in an unacceptable proliferation of access points.
101. Question 12 of the P1 Form indicates that access arrangements for this development involve the use of an existing unaltered access to the public road on the motorway side of the site and the construction of new access he Moira Road to the boundary with the settlement. .
102. The supporting planning statement dated October 2019 explains at paragraph 5.153 that the proposal has been the subject of a comprehensive transport assessment, an assessment which has looked at the impact of the proposed M1-Knockmore link road on the wider Lisburn road network and the sustainable transport infrastructure that is promised for the wider West Lisburn (Blaris) area.
103. Paragraph 5.155 of the planning statement explains that the modelling assessment demonstrates that the M1-Knockmore link road provides additional capacity to the existing transportation infrastructure and enhances multi-modal

accessibility to public transport with the opportunity to provide orbital city centre bus services linking to the key attractors of Lisburn City Centre, the proposed Knockmore rail and park and ride site and intervening areas.

104. Design principles agreed with DfI Roads prior to the application being submitted have been embedded into the detailed design of the road in relation to:

- A section of the road being dual carriageway matching A101 design specification and designed to a speed of 50mph with the following design characteristics:
 - Four 3.65 metre lanes (to suit HGV traffic)
 - Two 1.0 metre hard strips at carriageway edges;
 - 2.7 metre grass central reserve including 200mm edge strips;
 - 5 metre grass verge on western and eastern side; and
 - 4 metre shared footway/cycleway on eastern side of the carriageway.

- Four Lane Road cross section from the roundabout heading towards the northward, designed to a speed of 40mph and comprised of the following:
 - Four 3.5 metre lands designed to speed limit of 40mph;
 - no hard strips at carriageway edges to reflect and be consistent with the existing Knockmore Road;
 - no central reserve;
 - 2 metre central reserve;
 - 2 metre footway on western and eastern side; and
 - 5 metre grass verge on western and eastern side.

- Bridge cross section, designed to 40mph with bridge section comprising the following elements:
 - four 3.5 metre lanes,
 - no hard strips at carriage way edges to match the existing status of Knockmore Road;
 - no central reserves;
 - 2.5 metre footway on western side;
 - 3.75 metre shared footway/cycleway on eastern side; and
 - two 0.5 metre parapet widths

- Blaris Road design specification comprises
 - 7.3 metre carriageway;
 - 2 metre footway
 - 3 metre cycleway; and
 - 2/3 metre landscape strip

105. Paragraph 6.2 of the D&AS indicates that the route of the new road passes over the River Lagan which creates the need for a bridge to be constructed at this location.

106. Paragraph 3.8 of the NTS provides detail on the Bridge design. It explains that various iterations have been assessed to consider the impact of the bridge structure on the River Lagan Floodplain and that it has been concluded that the overall length of the bridge should be 73 metres in two spans before the structure would cause an increase in flood level.
107. The NTS also explains that it is likely that the bridge will need to be piled and that the depths and size of piles will be confirmed following a detailed site investigation.
108. The statement advises that the preferred construction method for the bridge deck is the use of precast beams to minimise the construction period adjacent to the river. The associated double spans will require employment of W16 precast bridge beams with a 200mm deck slab giving a structural depth of around 2.2 metres.
109. Paragraph 6.6 of the D&AS explains that it is proposed to have a number of smaller priority junctions along the route to serve smaller sections of the development and to create permeability along the route.

Transport Assessment

110. Policy AMP 6 – Transport Assessment (TA) states that In order to evaluate the transport implications of a development proposal the Department will, where appropriate, require developers to submit a Transport Assessment
111. The supporting planning statement dated October 2019 explains at paragraph 5.153 that the proposal has been the subject of a comprehensive transport assessment, an assessment which has looked at the impact of the proposed M1-Knockmore link road on the wider Lisburn network and the sustainable transport infrastructure that is promised for the wider Blaris area.
112. It also advises that the TA including the collection of extensive count information from several junction locations across the Lisburn network.
113. The TA included at Chapter 6 of the Environmental Statement provides an assessment of the travel characteristics with regard to pedestrian facilities, cycling facilities, public transport facilities (including Sprucefield Park and Ride, West Lisburn Rail Halt and the Rapid Transit – Glider) and private vehicle trips.
114. It also provides an assessment of impacts in terms of traffic, existing traffic flows and modelled traffic growth. Junction analyses are also carried out..
115. The analysis within the TA concludes that the proposed traffic volumes through Lisburn City Centre do not exceed the existing levels (without the Link Road in place).

116. Paragraph 4.7 of the addendum to the Environmental Statement advises that minor changes to the proposed link road have no significant transport impact which needs mitigated beyond what is outlined in the following section.

Environmental Considerations – Transport

117. Chapter 6 of the Environmental Statement is prepared by RPS to assess the impact of the proposed 1.6 km new link road.
118. It explains that the construction of the link road will facilitate access to a proposed new mixed use development and that the design of the link road has been developed to satisfy highways requirements for this non -strategic road and to ensure that it is of a standard to accommodate the anticipated total quantum of development anticipated at West Lisburn (Blaris).
119. Baseline conditions and embedded mitigation are outlined at paragraphs 6.19 – 6.30 of the Chapter.
120. A baseline assessment of four modes of transport (pedestrian, cycling, public transport and private vehicle) was carried out as detailed in the Transport Assessment.
121. In terms of embedded mitigation, paragraph 6.23 explains that the proposed development has been designed to encourage sustainable modes of transport and that public transport facilities will be incorporated within the proposed development site along with bus stops (two north bound and three south bound) at identified locations on the proposed link road.
122. The use of public transport, Translink incentives in the form of Travel Card/iLink/ALink cards will be implemented as part of the scheme.
123. As detailed at paragraphs 6.31 – 6.35, the assessment of the effects of the proposed development on the surrounding highway network demonstrates that the provision of the link road will significantly improve traffic progression through Lisburn City Centre and that it will provide a direct link to the strategic road network for the west of Lisburn and in doing so, creates the opportunity for orbital bus services to connect to the existing radial services, improve the attractiveness of the proposed expanded park and ride site and also the proposed rail halt (and associated park and ride) at Knockmore.
124. The Link Road also provides potential to connect to a future link road to Maze Long Kesh further west.
125. Furthermore, the statement indicates that in addition to the direct positive long term impact of the proposed link road on traffic progression within Lisburn City Centre, mixed use development will increase and enhance the use of sustainable modes of transport and reduce reliance on private car trips which results in positive long term impact upon the existing local road network

(including Blaris Road) in Lisburn due to the re-distribution of traffic associated with the provision of the Knockmore Link Road.

126. Chapter 4 of the Addendum to the Environmental Statement notes that the Transport Assessment assumed that the entire mixed use development is constructed and operation in the year of opening when in reality with the exception of the link road, the development associated with the mixed use application will be constructed over a 15 year period.
127. DfI Roads advised in a response received on 24 April 2020 that they had no objection subject to inclusion of conditions
- to ensure there is a satisfactory means of access in the interests of road safety and the convenience of road users;
 - to ensure access is maintained to the Sprucefield Park and Ride site at all times;
 - to ensure the cost of operations associated with the provision and maintenance of signalised junctions are borne by the Applicant during initial operations; and
 - to ensure that all highway structures, retaining walls and culverting structures are designed in accordance with required standards.
128. Based on a review of the supporting documents and the advice from DfI Roads, it is considered that the proposed link road will create an accessible environment for everyone and that the access arrangements proposed to the public road and the creation new accesses to a public road will not prejudice road safety or significantly inconvenience the flow of traffic; nor will the proposal conflict with tests associated with policy AMP3. .
129. Furthermore, the TA has allowed for the transport implications of the link road on the surrounding road network to be evaluated.
130. With regard to environmental impact of the road works the Environmental Statement and associated Addendum demonstrate that the effect is not significant subject to the mitigation proposed.
131. Sustainable modes of transport are proposed and that the use of public transport will be promoted and implemented through Translink incentives and that it will significantly improve traffic progression through Lisburn City Centre, provide a direct link to the strategic road network for the west of Lisburn and in doing so, create the opportunity for orbital bus services to connect to the existing radial services.

Natural Heritage

132. The Regional Development Strategy 2035 provides regional guidance to conserve, protect and where possible enhance our natural environment. It recognises that effective care of the environment provides very real benefits in

terms of improving health and well-being, promoting economic development and addressing social problems which result from a poor quality environment.

133. Paragraph 6.169 of the SPPS acknowledges that the diversity of our habitats, species, landscapes and earth science features is an important and highly values assets of our society.
134. PPS 2 – Natural Heritage, sets out the planning polices for the conservation, protection and enhancement of our natural heritage.

European and Ramsar Sites – International

135. Policy NH1 – European and Ramsar Sites – International states that planning permission will only be granted for a development proposal that, either individually or in combination with existing and/or proposed plans or projects, is not likely to have a significant effect on:
 - a European Site (Special Protection Area, proposed Special Protection Area, Special Areas of Conservation, candidate Special Areas of Conservation and Sites of Community Importance); or
 - a listed or proposed Ramsar Site.
136. Shared Environmental Services confirmed in a response received on 7 May 2019 that the planning application was considered on behalf of the Council in light of the assessment requirements of Regulation 43 (1) of the Conservation (Natural Habitats, etc.) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1995 (as amended).
137. There is no evidence to suggest that the assessment carried out on the Council's behalf is not acceptable.
138. Having considered the nature, scale, timing, duration and location of the project Shared Environmental Services concluded that the proposal will not have an adverse effect on the site integrity of any European site hydrologically connected to the proposal site subject to condition whereby a detailed final Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) shall be submitted for approval of the Council prior to commencement of construction.
139. Advice provided stated that this CEMP must include all the avoidance and mitigation methodologies in the outline CEMP and protection of the water environment consistent with advice from DAERA's Water Management Unit (WMU).
140. In a response received on 27 January 2020, NED advised, consistent with advice from both SES and WMU that a detailed final Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) shall be submitted for approval of the Council prior to commencement of construction incorporating measures to identify the perceived risks to the aquatic environment, identify potential pollution pathways, and the mitigation measures to be employed which will negate the risk to any aquatic environment.

Species Protected by Law

141. Policy NH 2 – Species Protected by Law covers both European and nationally protected species. Policy states that planning permission will only be granted for a development proposal that is not likely to harm a European protected species.
142. Policy NH 3 - Sites of Nature Conservation Importance - National states that planning permission will only be granted for a development proposal that is not likely to have an adverse effect on the integrity, including the value of the site to the habitat network, or special interest of:
 - an Area of Special Scientific Interest;
 - a Nature Reserve;
 - a National Nature Reserve; or
 - a Marine Nature Reserve.
143. NED provided advice in relation to designated and protected sites, habitats and species in a response received on 25 January 2019.
144. It acknowledges receipt of Environmental Statement Chapter 9: Ecology and confirmed that its contents had been considered.
145. The response noted that a suite of surveys (species/habitat) had been undertaken and that the surveys in relation to bats and otters should be appended to the environmental statement.
146. The response confirmed that they were content that the badger and newt surveys will not be required to be appended to the environmental statement. It was also noted that no newt habitat had been identified within the site boundary.
147. The response also acknowledge that no evidence of badgers was found throughout the site, however confirmed that the survey included locations 25 metres outside the site boundary.
148. With regard to the remaining surveys, NED recommended that further survey information in relation to bats and otters should be requested to allow them to fully assess the proposed development.
149. In May 2020 an Addendum to the Environmental Statement was provided to address or clarify consultee comments.
150. In a response dated 29 June 2020, NED acknowledged receipt of a letter dated 29 May 2020, providing updated chapters to the Environmental Statement including Introduction, Hydrology and Drainage, Noise and Vibration, Ecology, Summary and Conclusion. No objection is offered.

Environmental Information - Ecology

151. Section 11 of the Environmental Statement – Non Technical Summary (NTS) advises that a comprehensive suite of field surveys were undertaken in 2016 and 2017 to ascertain the general ecological value of land, to identify the main habitats and associated plant and protected species.
152. Paragraph 11.3 explains that the application site associated with the link road, comprises a mix of grazed pasture and arable fields intersected by drainage ditches and fragmented hedgerows with generally poor structural integrity and species composition.
153. It also explains that field margins consisting of rough grassland species are also present and that the southern extent of the application site contains areas of scrub with scatter trees and a section of the River Lagan present in the northern extent.
154. The NTS advises provides as synopsis of field survey results carried out in relation to Bats, Newts, Breeding Birds, Badgers and Otters.
155. Paragraph 11.17 provides a summary indicating that the habitats within the application site to be affected by the development are considered to be of generally limited ecological value and that there is no evidence to suggest that the proposed development would lead to a significant impact on any known protected species or ecological features of value.
156. Chapter 9 of the Environmental Statement sets out any potential impacts arising from the development proposals together with any strategies to minimise or avoid the effects identified.
157. In terms of Habitat surveys, an extended Phase 1 Survey looked at the following natural heritage features:
 - Fauna
 - Bats
 - Amphibians
 - Badgers
 - Otters
158. Surveys took into account the existing site context, statutory designated sites, non-statutory designations, and a full range of ecological features.
159. It was concluded that there were no statutory designated or non-designated sites of nature conservation value within or adjacent to the application.
160. Belshaws Quarry ASSI/ASI/NR located 3.5 km north of the application site was identified as being the closest statutory designated site with both Lough Neagh. Lough Beg Ramsar/SPA located approximately 13 km north west being identified as the closest international/European nature conservation site.

161. The hydrological links associated with the River Lagan which runs through the application are addressed through a shadow habitats regulations assessment.
162. The nearest non-statutory site to the application site is identified as Old Warren SLNCI which lies 0.7km to the east of the application site.
163. All other non-statutory sites are identified as being located more distant from the application site. Due to distance involved, no construction or operation impacts were identified.
164. In view of the illustrative masterplan, the construction impacts on natural/semi-natural habitats are summarised as:
- permanent and/or temporary losses to grazed pasture, arable land, rough grassland, buildings, scrub, trees, hedgerows and open water; and
 - potential for contamination of open water and watercourses.
165. In all cases, the statement indicates that the impacts are mainly at the local level and of minor significance.
166. With regard to protected species identified, the statement indicates that whilst the construction phase will result in the loss of potential foraging and navigational resources these habitats are in the main, of poor quality in terms of species diversity and structural quality and as such, they do not offer high value foraging and community resources. Assessments also conclude that no bat roosts have been identified within the site.
167. With regard to operational phases, the only potential significant impact on bats relates to increase lighting. The majority of bat species identified at the application site are species which are known to be tolerant to increased light levels and as such, the new lighting associated with the road link would not be regarded as having a potential significant effect.
168. Amphibians are not regarded to use the application site and breeding bird habitat is limited across the site to areas of scrub, hedgerow and trees and as such, no impacts are identified.
169. No evidence of badger setts or evidence of badger activity was recorded during specific survey and as such, it is considered that the application site does not support a significant badger population. The mobile nature of this species is however noted.
170. At an operational stage, given the nature of the proposed link road, potential impacts to badgers is limited to the potential increase of road traffic accidents. That said, the underpass created by the bridge crossing the floodplain provides a safe crossing point.

171. Evidence of otter was identified along the banksides of the River Lagan and outside of the application site. No breeding habitat, in the form of otter holts were recorded.
172. In terms of construction impacts, no works are to take place in proximity to the River Lagan and as such, potential impacts on otters relates to temporary noise disturbance. Given that otters are largely active during the hours of darkness, it is considered that this disturbance is highly unlikely.
173. With regard to operational impacts, these are limited to the potential death of otters through traffic collision associated with the new link road. As explained above, the underpass created as the bridge crosses the floodplain provides a safe crossing point.
174. Given that the proposed link road development will give rise to no significant adverse environmental effects on habitats or species of ecological or nature conservation value, the proposed development is unlikely to result in any cumulative impact upon these features when considered alone or as demonstrated by way of separate report in combination with the associated mixed use scheme.

Archaeology and Built Heritage

175. Paragraph 6.3 of the SPSS advises that the aim in relation to Archaeology and Built Heritage is to manage change in positive ways so as to safeguard that which society regards as significant whilst facilitating development that will contribute to the ongoing preservation, conservation and enhancement of these assets.
176. PPS 6 - Planning, Archaeology and the Built Heritage sets out policies for the protection of our archaeology and built heritage.

Protection of Archaeological remains of local importance and their settings

177. Policy BH 2 – Protection of Archaeological remains of local importance and their settings states that development proposals which would adversely affect archaeological sites or monuments which are of local importance or their settings will only be permitted where the planning authority considers the importance of the proposed development or other material considerations outweigh the value of the remains in question.

Archaeological Assessment and Evaluation

178. Policy BH 3 - Archaeological Assessment and Evaluation states that where the impact of a development proposal on important archaeological remains is unclear, or the relative importance of such remains is uncertain, the

Department will normally require developers to provide further information in the form of an archaeological assessment or an archaeological evaluation.

179. The policy also advises that where such information is requested but not made available the planning authority will normally refuse planning permission.

Archaeological Mitigation

180. Policy BH 4 – Archaeological Mitigation states that where it is decided to grant planning permission for development which will affect sites known to contain archaeological remains, the planning authority will impose conditions to ensure that appropriate measures are taken for the identification and mitigation of the archaeological impacts of the development, including where appropriate, the completion of a licensed excavation and recording of remains before development commences.
181. Historic Environment Division (HED) – Monuments provided comment on the application in December 2018 which confirm that they have reviewed the submitted Cultural Heritage section in the Environmental Statement (Chapter 13) and that they are content that this has adequately identified the potential archaeological impacts of the proposed development.
182. The response advised that the application site is in immediate vicinity to the medieval church site at Blaris (DOW 014:046), and contains the World War II airbase (RAF Blaris) that is included in the Defence Heritage Project.
183. The response notes that the chapter identified concerns over the operation of Blaris airfield (DHP 120), and that it further identified that the area of the suggested airfield was used as a military camp dating back to the 1798 Rebellion.
184. The advice provided acknowledged that the application site was approximately 18hectares in size and that experience has shown that that large development sites of this scale are rarely archaeologically sterile, and given the known archaeology within the immediate area there is a potential for previously unrecorded below ground archaeological remains to be found during ground works for the proposal.
185. In light of this, advice received advised that any acceptable archaeological programme of works should include an appropriate mitigation strategy to identify and record any features associated with these sequences of use.
186. The response explained that this programme is required to identify and record any archaeological remains in advance of new construction, or to provide for their preservation in situ, as per Policy BH 4 of PPS 6.

Environmental Information – Cultural Heritage

187. Section 15 of the NTS advises that a Cultural Heritage chapter has been prepared to assess the likely significant effects of the proposed development on the historic environment with particular reference to the likely effects to archaeology receptors within the site and built heritage assets both within and outside the site including their setting.
188. Considerations have been given to all built heritage assets within 1 km radius of the site.
189. Baseline conditions identify the nearest designated archaeological heritage asset as Lagan Navigation Reach 10 (DOW 009:500, IHR no. 2680) which lies 950 metres east of the application site.
190. The archaeological assessment established that there was no intervisibility between the site and this asset due to distance, intervening modern housing and vegetation. As such, the assessment considered that no impact could arise.
191. Paragraph 13.37 advises that there are no non-designated archaeological heritage assets mapped within the site. It also advises that it is possible that the link road site lies at in part within land that was use both as a military camp and/or an airfield.
192. The farmstead around Carlton House/Myrtle Hill is considered to represent the best location for settlement within the wider study area.
193. Paragraph 15.2 of the NTS advises that the proposed development has the potential to impact only on Carlton House – a non-designated heritage asset of low value.
194. The NTS notes that the construction phase will include engineering and construction works within the setting of the building (primarily associated with the construction of the bridge to carry the road over the Lagan) introducing additional noise, dust, vibration and some visual interference. This will have an adverse impact on the present sense of isolation and relative tranquillity experienced for a temporary period.
195. At the operational stage, the proposed development will result in indirect impacts to the value of Carton House as a result of the noise and lighting associated with the road whilst the new bridge structure is likely to be a visible feature within the setting of the building.
196. A former medieval church is also identified immediately adjacent to the sites south eastern boundary associated with the later graveyard (DOW014:046).

197. Based on evidence available, the assessment identifies a low theoretical potential for the site to contain undiscovered archaeological evidence from any period.
198. With regard to built heritage, assessment identified no designated built heritage assets within the site.
199. Based on information provided, there are no known archaeological heritage assets mapped within the footprint of the proposed link road development. That said, the statement notes at paragraph 13.57 that a programme of archaeological works will be required to determine the presence or absence of any archaeological remains.
200. Standard mitigation measures in relation to a programme of archaeological works will reduce the significance of effect on the buried archaeological resource to neutral.

Planning and Flood Risk

201. The SPPS recognises that flooding is a natural process that cannot be entirely prevented. It also acknowledges that climate change is generally expected to increase flood risk, albeit that there remains much uncertainty as to the degree of climate change that will occur and the implications for particular areas of Northern Ireland.
202. PPS 15 – Planning and Flood Risk sets out policy to minimise and manage flood risk to people, property and the environment. The susceptibility of all land to flooding is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.
203. The River Lagan which is designated under the Drainage (NI) Order 1973 flows through part of the site and will be crossed by the proposed road. Detail associated with paragraph 13.2 of the NTS explains that detailed flood maps show that part of the route for the proposed link road is at risk of flooding from the Lagan.
204. Initial discussions with DfI Rivers advised that the Flood Risk Assessment carried out would have to clearly demonstrate by means of a river model that there was no increase in flood risk or in the flood plain extent as a result of the proposed development.

Development in Fluvial and coastal Flood Plains

205. Policy FLD1 - Development in Fluvial and coastal Flood Plains states that development will not be permitted within the 1 in 100 year fluvial flood plain (AEP7 of 1%) or the 1 in 200 year coastal flood plain (AEP of 0.5%) unless the applicant can demonstrate that the proposal constitutes an exception to the policy.

206. Within this context, DfI Rivers advised that the Flood Maps (NI) indicate that portions of the development lie within the 1 in 100 year fluvial flood plain.
207. For this reason, the advice received on 22 March 2019 indicated that the proposal was contrary to Policy FLD1 and as such, Rivers Agency were opposed to any such development taking place unless the application to be an exception (through meeting one of the exceptions listed under the exceptions heading of PPS 15 FLD1).
208. Within this context, it is considered that the proposed link road development constitutes an exception to policy FLD 1 in accordance with criteria (d) in that this is transport infrastructure, which has to be located within the flood plain to connect to the existing road infrastructure.

Protection of Flood Defence and Drainage Infrastructure

209. Policy FLD 2 - Protection of Flood Defence and Drainage Infrastructure The planning authority will not permit development that would impede the operational effectiveness of flood defence and drainage infrastructure or hinder access to enable their maintenance.
210. Advice received on 22 March 2019 indicated that the site is traversed at the north by a watercourse which is designated under the terms of the Drainage (Northern Ireland) Order 1973, and known to DfI Rivers as the 'River Lagan.
211. It also advised that the site was bounded at the south east by a watercourse which is designated under the terms of the Drainage (Northern Ireland) Order 1973, and known to DfI Rivers as the 'Blaris Drain No. 2'.
212. Advice received confirmed that there are other undesignated watercourses which bound or traverse the proposed site.
213. The advice received also confirmed that it was essential that an adjacent working strip is retained to facilitate future maintenance by Rivers Agency, other statutory undertaker or the riparian landowners. The working strip should have a minimum width of 5 metres, but up to 10 metres where considered necessary, and be provided with clear access and egress at all times as outlined at paragraph 6.32 of the justification and amplification to Policy FLD 2.

Development and Surface Water (Pluvial) Flood Risk Outside Flood Plains

214. Policy FLD 3 - Development and Surface Water (Pluvial) Flood Risk Outside Flood Plains states that a Drainage Assessment will be required for all development proposals that exceed any of the following thresholds:
 - A residential development comprising of 10 or more dwelling units

- A development site in excess of 1 hectare
 - A change of use involving new buildings and / or hard surfacing exceeding 1000 square metres in area.
215. The drainage assessment submitted with the application was not to the standard required and on 22 March 2019 explained that the detail associated with the Drainage Assessment insufficient detail to enable a detailed assessment to be undertaken. The applicant was directed to Annex D of PPS 15.
216. In a response received on 5 August 2020, DfI Rivers confirmed that it had reviewed an updated drainage assessment. The response acknowledged that the applicant did not intend to apply for consent to discharge at that time. The response did however advise that all drainage design must be completed in accordance with the requirements of revised PPS 15.
217. In a response received on 23 September 2020, Rivers Agency acknowledged receipt of the revised drainage calculations dated August 2020. The response confirmed that whilst not being responsible for the preparation of the Drainage Assessment, they did accept its logic and has no reason to disagree with its conclusions.
218. Advice from the Drainage and Water Unit within the Department for Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) received on 25 February 2019 confirmed that they had considered the impacts of the proposal on surface water environment and on the basis of the information provided were content subject to condition requiring the provision of a detailed construction environment management plan (CEMP).

Artificial Modification of watercourses

219. Policy FLD4 - Artificial Modification of watercourses states that the planning authority will only permit the artificial modification of a watercourse, including culverting or canalisation operations, in either of the following exceptional circumstances:
- Where the culverting of short length of a watercourse is necessary to provide access to a development site or part thereof; or
 - Where it can be demonstrated that a specific length of watercourse needs to be culverted for engineering reasons and that there are no reasonable or practicable alternative courses of action.
220. Advice received from DfI Rivers on 22 March 2019 explained that no details are provided with the applicants proposals in relation to modification of watercourses.
221. It made comment that the site location map contained within the submitted Flood Risk Assessment indicated the proposed road will traverse a tributary of the Blaris Drain No.2.

222. The response noted that artificial modification of a watercourse is normally not permitted unless it is necessary to provide access to a development site or for engineering reasons.
223. As explained above within the context of FLD 1 considerations, the modification referred to is considered to be acceptable as the proposed link road development constitutes an exception in accordance with criteria (d) of Policy FLD 1. The works in or around the existing drain are required for the road works.
224. Section 8.4 of the Flood Risk & Drainage Assessment confirms that no artificial modifications of any other watercourse are taking place as part of this proposed development.

Development in Proximity to Reservoirs

225. Policy FLD5 - Development in Proximity to Reservoirs is not considered to be applicable to this site.

Environmental Information – Hydrology and Drainage

226. Chapter 11 of the Environmental Statement addresses the potential impacts of the proposed development on flooding and drainage.
227. The Flood Risk and Drainage Assessment considered the existing flood risk associated with river flooding, coastal flooding, surface water flooding and flooding from impounded water bodies.
228. Of the four main sources of flooding outlined above, the statement indicated at paragraph 11.5 that part of the route for the proposed link road is at risk of flooding from the River Lagan.
229. In terms of impact, the Statement considered impacts to storm drainage and impact of flooding from the River Lagan.
230. Paragraph 11.21 of the Statement advises that the drainage strategy is to discharge Greenfield run-off from the proposed road to the adjacent watercourses and that storage will be provided to limit the discharge to greenfield run-off by the use of attenuation ponds and oversized pipes and manholes. It also advised that the discharge from the attenuation to the outfall will be restricted by the use of a flow control device.
231. Paragraph 11.23 explains that the road drainage will be designed to the most recent standard in DMRB Volume 4 Section 2 (or equivalent at the date of construction) standards as required by DfI Roads. Confirmation is provided that no new or existing dwellings will be at risk of flooding from overland flow.

232. In terms of flooding impacts from the River Lagan, paragraph 11.24 of the Environmental Statement advises that in order to prevent the bridge over the River Lagan constricting the flow and potentially increasing flood risk locally, the river model was used to assist the designers with the geometric size and orientation of the bridge. The final bridge design comprises two spans of 37 metres each in order to minimise the impact of the bridge structure on the existing floodplain.
233. Paragraph 11.25 of the Environmental Statement advises that the predicted water levels were compared at sections at the bridge location and for a distance upstream and downstream with and without the structures. The results show that there are no changes to the predicted flood levels as a result of the proposed bridge. Detail at paragraph 11.27 also confirms that the proposed soffit level for the bridge is 32.73 m OD, which still provides a freeboard of 1.36 metres above the Q100 level flood level in the climate change scenario.
234. Furthermore, the evidence submitted with the application demonstrates that the development will not impede the operational effectiveness of any flood defence or drainage infrastructure or hind access for maintenance.
235. In terms of drainage, the drainage strategy to discharge greenfield runoff from the proposed road to the adjacent watercourses and the provision of storage in the form of attenuation ponds and oversized pipes is considered to be acceptable.
236. Evidence is submitted to demonstrate that the risk of flooding from a drainage aspect can be effectively controlled and mitigated so as not to create potential for surface water flooding elsewhere.

Noise Vibration and Air Quality

237. Detail submitted with the application indicates that Noise Impact and Air Quality Assessments have been undertaken and are part of the Environmental Statement.
238. With regard to noise, the assessment of the existing noise climate around the proposed road, the transportation noise impacts on existing residential properties associated with the operation of the road and the short term impact as a consequence of construction activities were considered.
239. Detail submitted with the application advises that background levels were measured in the vicinity of the site at three locations (northern, western and eastern areas) on two different occasions. The levels measured were deemed representative of the background noise levels.
240. Construction noise limits were assessed against standard noise limits and found to be compliant at all existing residential properties. Mitigation in the

form of temporary hoarding can be erect to provide 5 – 10 dB (A) attenuation thereby ensuring that construction noise limits are not breached.

241. Changes in noise levels as a consequence of the road were rated as negligible when compared against DMRB descriptors.
242. Paragraph 9.6 of the NTS advises that no construction activities are envisaged to be close enough for vibration to be significant. The nearest piling operations associated with the construction of the bridge over the River Lagan cross approximately 600 metres from the Masonic Hall and 250 metres from the nearest existing dwelling.
243. In terms of Air Quality, the assessment has taken the following into consideration:
 - The existing air quality around the proposed development;
 - The transportation air quality impacts acting upon existing residential properties; and
 - The short term dust impacts as a consequence of construction activities.
244. Mitigation measures to include the use of wheel wash facility and water assisted dust sweeps on the access and local roads will ensure that vehicles entering and leaving the site are covered and that no significant dust impacts will arise as a result of the link road development.

Contamination

245. Paragraph 3.6 of the SPPS emphasises that identifying previously developed land within settlements including sites which may have environmental constraints (e.g. land contamination), can assist with the return to productive use of vacant or underused land. This can help deliver more attractive environments, assist with economic regeneration and renewal, and reduce the need for green field development.
246. It continues at 6.321 to state when decision-taking important considerations will include: the types of waste to be deposited or treated and the proposed method of disposal; impacts on human health and the environment (including environmental pollution).
247. The NTS confirms that a Preliminary Risk Assessment (PRA) was undertaken at the site and wider study area to identify the historical and recent use of the site and adjacent lands.
248. The PRA findings recommended that a Phase 2 Generic Quantative Risk Assessment (GQRA) be carried out to include an intrusive site investigation.

249. The NTS advises that the investigation was targeted to the following identified sources of potential ground contamination:
- Offsite – Former RAF Blaris;
 - Offsite – Fly tipping/infilling on lands immediately adjacent to the east of the park and ride;
 - Offsite – within a large farm in the northern portion of the study area;
 - Offsite – Potential infill/made ground located within a field in the northern portion of the study area;
 - Offsite – cemetery located along the Blaris Road.
250. Paragraph 12.3 of the NTS advises that sixteen boreholes were drilled and thirty-nine trial pits were excavated in the areas identified. Boreholes were also installed with groundwater and ground gas monitors.
251. The survey results confirmed that the ground conditions in the wider site are predominantly natural ground with only one area identified (area within farm in northern portion) as containing any made ground or fill.
252. The detailed soil and ground water analysis indicated in general, very low compound concentrations across the site reflecting again, the fairly natural conditions. The only area to indicate any significant impact related again to the farm area in the northern portion of the site.
253. Paragraph 12.7 of the NTS confirms that the ground gas risk undertaken has classified the site as low risk.
254. Based on the information provided, it is accepted that the risks of contamination from the construction of the link road, with no buildings or enclosed structures proposed are low and as such, no mitigation is necessary.

Other Material Considerations

255. As indicated above, Section 6(4) of the Planning Act (NI) 2011 requires that in making a determination on planning applications, regard must be had to the requirements of the local development plan and that determination of applications must be in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
256. In the supporting planning statement dated October 2019 and an Economic Benefits Statement dated October 2019, the agent advances a number of other material considerations to be weighed as part of the decision making process.

Economic Benefits

257. The NTS recognises that the delivery of the M1-Knockmore link road is a critical pre-requisite to the realisation of the development of the wider Blaris lands.
258. Its construction will open up the Maze Long Kesh lands to development.
259. It will improve access to Knockmore Industrial Estate and serve to increase its catchment area by providing direct access to the M1, thereby reducing the movement of goods vehicles through the city helping to reduce congestion.
260. Construction of the road is estimated to support 55 FTE construction jobs over a building period of up to two years and generate some £4 million in GVA.
261. In addition, it is estimated that a further 33 indirect jobs in the construction supply chain will be supported giving a total of 88 direct and indirect jobs supported and generating around £6.5 million GVA during the construction period.
262. The construction of the road will also serve to
- deliver a sustainable lateral urban expansion of Lisburn connecting to the established western and south western city limits at Knockmore/Lissue and Sprucefield;
 - provide a vital missing link to the City's transport infrastructure, connecting the M1 east-west and A1 north-south corridors with the wider Lisburn conurbation through provision of the long anticipated M1-Knockmore link road;
 - enable sustainable orbital transport movements to be undertaken around the city of Lisburn;
 - bring substantial strategic benefits to the wider accessibility and movement around the city, notably reducing HGV movement in and around the city centre and offering direct access to the established employment areas at Knockmore and Lissue, thereby easing the movement of freight;
263. The strategic economic benefits of the proposed link road including the economic benefits that will be unlocked or enabled as a result of its construction carry significant weight in the assessment of this application.
264. The significance of the proposal in terms of the of unlocking the potential of the strategic land reserve at the Maze Long Kesh is recognised as one of the more significant benefits to be realised by the delivery of the road.

265. The continued development of land as a major centre for tourism in terms of operation of the Eikon exhibition centre by the RUAS and the operation of the aviation museum by the Ulster Aviation Society are constrained by the absence of a link to the strategic road network.
266. This is necessary infrastructure and the road as designed allows for this link to be realised in the future and provides impetus for a master plan to come forward for the balance of the land reserve.

Phasing

267. With regard to phasing, the NTS indicates at paragraph 4.1 that the full extent of the road will be constructed as one phase of development.
268. The programme is contingent however on planning permission being granted for the for the mixed use development of the neighbouring land either side of the road.
269. Should the members be minded to grant planning permission for related planning application for the mixed use development then this application will be subject to a planning agreement to ensure:
- that the proposed road works are delivered in full as a first phase; and
 - that the arm of the road proposed for future access to Maze Long Kesh is constructed in full as part of the contract and that there is no impediment connecting a new road to this in the future.
 - The signalised junctions will be maintained by the owners for a period of ten years

Conclusions

270. Significant material weight is afforded to the draft plan and PAC inquiry report which identified the proposed road as a developer led road scheme (proposal LC17).
271. The proposal satisfies the policy tests at paragraph 6.297 of the SPPS and key policy tests associated with PPS 3 in that that the proposed access arrangements to the public road and detailed design of the public road will not prejudice road safety or significantly inconvenience the flow of traffic.
272. The environmental impacts of the construction and operation of the road are addressed in the Environmental Statement and associated Addendum. It is demonstrated that the road has the capacity to operate without give rise to significant adverse traffic impacts and without creating significant environmental effects. .

273. It also demonstrated that the proposed development has been designed to support sustainable modes of transport and that public transport facilities.
274. It allows for further improvement to the Sprucefield Park and Ride facility access from the motorway to the proposed Knockmore Rail Halt and the use of public transport will be promoted through Translink incentives to operate local bus connections into Lisburn City that will significantly improve traffic progression through Lisburn City Centre, provide a direct link to the strategic road network for the west of Lisburn and in doing so, create the opportunity for orbital bus services to connect to the existing radial services.
275. A pedestrian cycle way is also provided with access to the Sustrans cycle network.
276. The proposed development satisfies the policy tests at paragraph 6.172 of the SPPS and the key policy tests associate with PPS 2 in that the detail submitted demonstrates that the development of the link road will not harm a European protected species nor is it likely to have any significant adverse effect on the integrity, including the value of the site to the habitat network, or any natural feature of special interest.
277. With regard to the environmental impact on the ecology of the local and wider environment the Environmental Statement and associated Addendum demonstrated that the construction and operational impacts associated with the development of the proposed link road will not give rise to significant adverse effects on habitats or species of ecological or nature conservation value. The proposed development is unlikely to result in any cumulative impact upon these features when considered alone or in association with the development of the neighbouring lands.
278. The proposal complies with paragraph 6.4 of the SPPS and policy tests in PPS 6 in that the development of the link road will not adversely affect any archaeological sites or monuments which are of local importance including their settings.
279. With regard to environmental effects associated with the cultural heritage features identified in the Environmental Statement and associated Addendum demonstrate that there are no known archaeological heritage assets mapped within the footprint of the proposed link road development that would be significantly impacted by the proposed development.
280. Furthermore, the standard mitigation measures proposed in the programme of archaeological works will reduce the significance of the effect on the buried archaeological assets to neutral.
281. The proposal is considered to comply with paragraph 6.104 of the SPPS and the policy tests in PPS 15 in that the proposed link road is an exception in accordance with criteria (d) of policy FLD1 in that this is transport infrastructure,

which has to be located within the flood plain to connect to the existing road infrastructure.

282. Furthermore, the evidence submitted with the application demonstrates that the development will not impede the operational effectiveness of any flood defence or drainage infrastructure or hinder access for maintenance.
283. The drainage proposal to discharge storm run-off at greenfield rates to the adjacent watercourse and the provision of storage in the form of attenuation ponds and oversized pipes is considered to be acceptable.
284. With regard to environmental hydrology and drainage impacts of the proposed road, the Environmental Statement and associated Addendum demonstrate that the environmental risk of flooding from a drainage aspect can be effectively controlled and mitigated so as not to create potential for surface water discharge to increase flooding elsewhere and that the proposed bridge minimises the impact of infilling land in the floodplain and is an acceptable flood mitigation measure.
285. The strategic economic benefits of the proposed link road as a result of its construction carry significant weight in the assessment of this application. The road gives the Knockmore Hill, Lissue and Ballinderry Road Industrial Estates direct access to the strategic road network.
286. It facilitates the development of West Lisburn (Blaris) as a place for major economic growth. The road is designed to allow future access to the Maze Long Kesh strategic land reserve and the major untapped tourism asset based around the assets cared for by the Ulster Aviation Society.
287. The road is a developer led proposal and linked to a proposal for mixed use development. Its construction is indicated to be in one contract the timing of its delivery must be secured by way of a planning agreement.

Recommendation

288. The application is presented to the Committee with a recommendation to approve subject to condition and section 76 planning agreement.

Condition(s)

289. The following conditions are recommended:

1. As required by section 61 of the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011, the development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of 5 years from the date of this permission.
Reason: Time limit
2. The necessary carriageway, junctions, bridge, vehicular accesses, including visibility splays and any forward sight distance, have been constructed in accordance with the approved Drawings:

03A Existing Survey

04A Proposed Overall Layout

05A Proposed Road Layout Sheet 1 of 6

06A Proposed Road Layout Sheet 2 of 6

07A Proposed Road Layout Sheet 3 of 6

08A Proposed Road Layout Sheet 4 of 6

09A Proposed Road Layout Sheet 5 of 6

10A Proposed Road Layout Sheet 6 of 6

11A Proposed General Arrangement Sheet 1 of 6

12A Proposed General Arrangement Sheet 2 of 6

13A Proposed General Arrangement Sheet 3 of 6

14A Proposed General Arrangement Sheet 4 of 6

15A Proposed General Arrangement Sheet 5 of 6

17A Proposed Geometry Sheet 1 of 6 18A Proposed Geometry Sheet 2 of 6

19A Proposed Geometry Sheet 3 of 6

20A Proposed Geometry Sheet 4 of 6

21A Proposed Geometry Sheet 5 of 6

22A Proposed Geometry Sheet 6 of 6

23A Proposed Levels and Visibility Sheet 1 of 6

24A Proposed Levels and Visibility Sheet 2 of 6

25A Proposed Levels and Visibility Sheet 3 of 6

26A Proposed Levels and Visibility Sheet 4 of 6

27A Proposed Levels and Visibility Sheet 5 of 6

28A Proposed Levels and Visibility Sheet 6 of 6

29A Proposed Construction Make Up Sheet 1 of 6

30A Proposed Construction Make Up Sheet 2 of 6

31A Proposed Construction Make Up Sheet 3 of 6

32A Proposed Construction Make Up Sheet 4 of 6

33A Proposed Construction Make Up Sheet 5 of 6

34A Proposed Construction Make Up Sheet 6 of 6

35A Proposed Drainage Layout Sheet 1 of 6

36A Proposed Drainage Layout Sheet 2 of 6

37A Proposed Drainage Layout Sheet 3 of 6

38A Proposed Drainage Layout Sheet 4 of 6

39A Proposed Drainage Layout Sheet 5 of 6
 40A Proposed Drainage Layout Sheet 6 of 6
 41A Proposed Road Markings Sheet 1 of 6
 42A Proposed Road Markings Sheet 2 of 6
 43A Proposed Road Markings Sheet 3 of 6
 44A Proposed Road Markings Sheet 4 of 6
 45A Proposed Road Markings Sheet 5 of 6
 46A Proposed Road Markings Sheet 6 of 6
 47A Proposed Traffic Signals Sheet 1 of 3
 48A Proposed Traffic Signals Sheet 2 of 3
 49A Existing and Proposed Cross Sections Sheet 1 of 8
 50A Existing and Proposed Cross Sections Sheet 2 of 8
 51A Existing and Proposed Cross Sections Sheet 3 of 8
 52A Existing and Proposed Cross Sections Sheet 4 of 8
 53A Existing and Proposed Cross Sections Sheet 5 of 8
 54A Existing and Proposed Cross Sections Sheet 6 of 8
 55A Existing and Proposed Cross Sections Sheet 7 of 8
 56A Existing and Proposed Cross Sections Sheet 8 of 8
 57A Existing and Proposed Long Sections Sheet 1 of 5
 58A Existing and Proposed Long Sections Sheet 2 of 5
 59A Existing and Proposed Long Sections Sheet 3 of 5
 60A Existing and Proposed Long Sections Sheet 4 of 5
 61A Existing and Proposed Long Sections Sheet 5 of 5
 62A Typical Cross Section
 63A Typical Bridge Section
 64A Proposed Construction Details
 65 Proposed Autotracks Sheet 1 of 2
 66 Proposed Autotracks Sheet 2 of 2
 67 Proposed Traffic Signals Sheet 3 of 3

Reason: To ensure there is a satisfactory means of access in the interests of road safety and the convenience of road users.

3. No development shall commence until full details of r the signalisation, lane re-alignment and remarking of the Moira Road at the junction with the Knockmore Road and the 'new link road' and of the junction with the roundabouts on the A101 and the 'new link road', have been submitted to and approved by the Council.

Reason: To ensure there is a satisfactory means of access in the interests of road safety and the convenience of road users.

4. The Private Streets (Northern Ireland) Order 1980 as amended by the Private Streets (Amendment) (Northern Ireland) Order 1992. The Department shall, for the purpose of adopting private streets as public roads, determine the width, position and arrangement of the streets associated with the development and the land to be regarded as comprised in those streets.

Reason: To ensure there is a safe and convenient road system within the development and to comply with the provisions of the Private Streets (Northern Ireland) Order 1980.

5. Any existing street furniture or landscaping obscuring visibility or located within the work proposed shall, be removed, relocated or adjusted at the applicant's expense.
Reason: In the interests of road safety and the convenience of road users.

6. No development including ground preparation or vegetation clearance, shall take place until a Construction and Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Council
The approved CEMP shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details and all works on site shall conform to the approved CEMP, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Council.
Reason: To protect Northern Ireland priority habitats and species, to ensure implementation of mitigation measures identified within the Construction Environmental Management Plan and to prevent likely significant effects on Inner Belfast Lough Area of Special Scientific Interest, Belfast Lough RAMSAR site, Belfast Lough Special Protection Area and Belfast Lough Open Water Special Protection Area.

7. No site works of any nature or development shall take place until a programme of archaeological work has been implemented, in accordance with a written scheme and programme prepared by a qualified archaeologist, submitted by the applicant and approved by the Department. The programme should provide for the identification and evaluation of archaeological remains within the site, for mitigation of the impacts of development, through excavation recording or by preservation of remains, and for preparation of an archaeological report.
Reason: to ensure that archaeological remains within the application site are properly identified, and protected or appropriately recorded.

8. Access shall be afforded to the site at all reasonable times to any archaeologist nominated by the Council in consultation with the Department for Communities to observe the operations and to monitor the implementation of archaeological requirements.
Reason: to monitor programmed works in order to ensure that identification, evaluation and appropriate recording of any archaeological remains, or any other specific work required by condition, or agreement is satisfactorily completed.

9. Construction shall be limited to between 0730-1800 from Monday to Friday and between 0800 to 1300 on Saturdays, with no construction activity on Sundays and Bank Holidays unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Council.
Reason: To protect the amenity of neighbouring dwellings with respect to noise

10. A two-metre high acoustic fence shall be erected to extend along the Eastern boundary of 92 Blaris Road. The barrier shall be erected prior to commencing construction of the development and removed within 30 days of the completion of the road works. The barrier should be constructed of

a suitable material (with no gaps), should have a minimum self-weight of 6 kg/m².

Reason: To protect the amenity of neighbouring dwellings with respect to noise

11. Prior to commencement of the development a plan shall to submitted to the Council detailing the works required to make the dwellings at 80 and 82 Blaris Road uninhabitable. The works shall be carried out as approved within 60 days of the date specified by the Council.

Reason: To protect the amenity of neighbouring dwellings with respect to noise

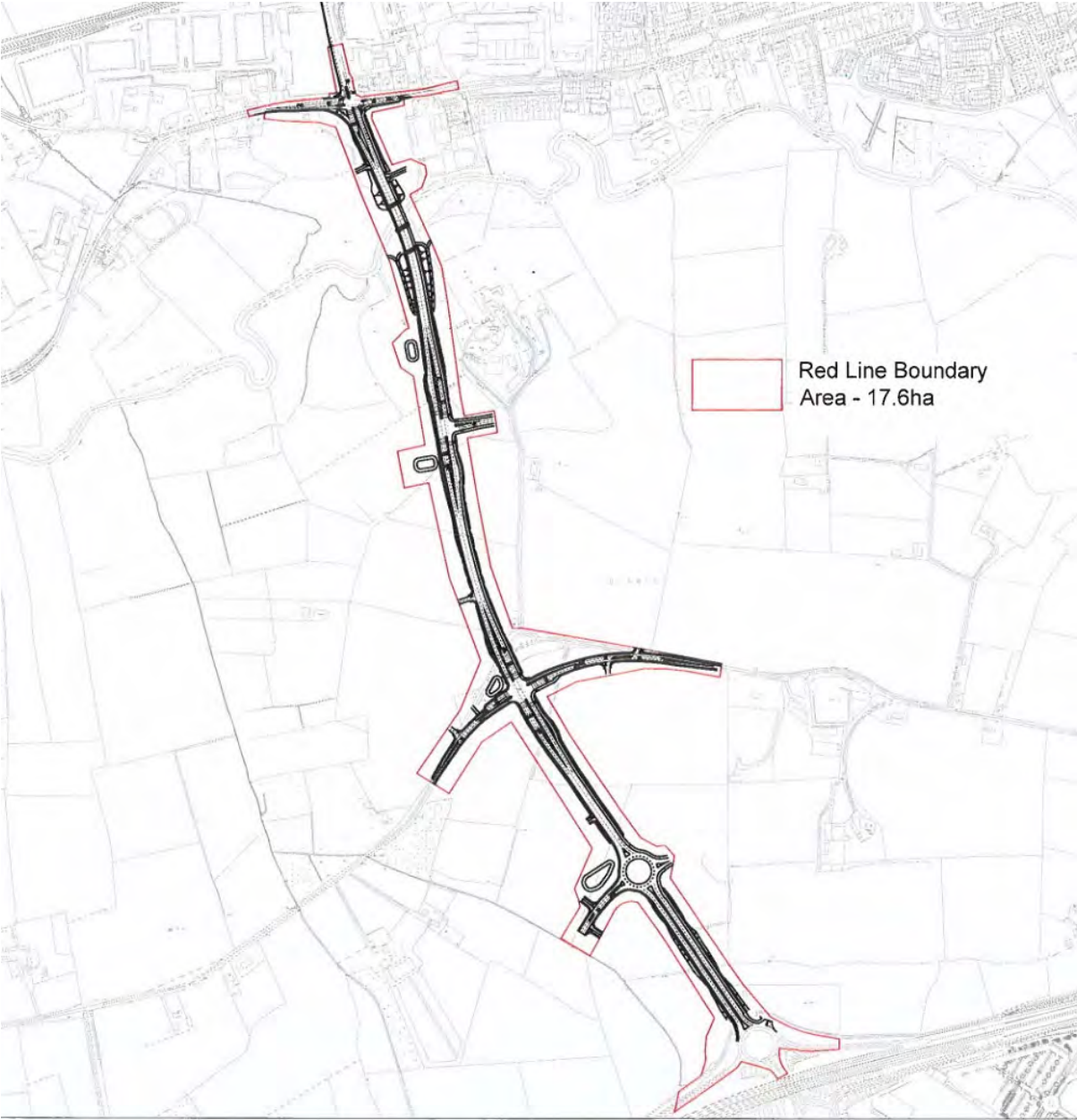
12. Prior to commencement of the development a Dust Management Plan shall be submitted to and agreed by the Council. The Plan shall be implemented within 7 days of the date specified by the Council.

Reason: To protect the amenity of neighbouring dwellings with respect to dust

13. In the event that previously unknown contamination is discovered (or underground storage tanks) are encountered, development on the site shall cease. The Council should be advised and a full written risk assessment in line with current government guidance (Model Procedures for the Management of Land Contamination – CLR11) that details the nature of the risks and any necessary mitigation measures should be submitted for approval by the Council.

Reason: To ensure that risks from land contamination to the future users of the land and neighbouring land are minimised, and to ensure that the development can be carried out safely without unacceptable risks to workers, neighbours and other offsite receptors

Site Location Plan – LA05/2018/1155/F



The Planning (Notification of Applications) Direction 2017 Statement of Reasons – LA05/2018/1154/O and LA05/2018/1155/F

Article 3 (e) of the Planning (Notification of Applications) Direction 2017 requires the Councils to set out reason(s) for proposing to grant planning permission in cases where:

- i. the application would significantly prejudice the implementation of the local development plan's objectives and policies;
- ii. the application would not be in accordance with any appropriate marine plan adopted under the Marine Act (Northern Ireland) 2013; and /or
- iii. a significant objection has been received by a statutory consultee or Government Department.

Whilst this statement addresses criteria i. it does so only in the context that the Department has saw fit to issue a Direction. Had no correspondence been received the Council would have concluded the application process, having regard to the Direction, but without the need to consult with the Department.

This is not an exceptional case and the Council does not consider this proposal to impact adversely on any significant regional policy objective. In fact it creates opportunity to unlock land designated to be of regional importance at the Maze. Criteria ii. and iii. are not engaged for either application as no marine plan is impacted by the development nor has any statutory consultee or Government Department objected to the application.

The reasons cited for approvals were as follows:

In respect of application **LA05/2018/1154/O** the Council does not consider the proposal to significantly prejudice the local development plan's policies and objectives for the following reasons:

1. BMAP is still not adopted and the question still continues to be asked as to whether an employment zoning can be sustained at West Lisburn. It is accepted that the rationale offered by the Commission for protecting the land for employment was valid at the time.
2. The findings of the Inquiry report are however almost ten years old and the potential of the land has not been realised. There is no evidence available in line with the advice detailed in the Inquiry report to conclude that other large housing schemes contributed or were required to contribute to the funding of the Knockmore Link Road.
3. The latest revision of the RDS retains West Lisburn (Blaris) as a location for major employment important to Northern Ireland as a region. The infrastructure necessary to unlock the potential of the land is not supported in a Plan and the Knockmore Link road is still regarded by the Department as a developer led road scheme.
4. There is an obvious tension between the ambition for West Lisburn as set out in the RDS and the direction offered in the draft Plan as to how this ambition might be realised.

The Planning (Notification of Applications) Direction 2017
Statement of Reasons – LA05/2018/1154/O and LA05/2018/1155/F

5. The weight to be afforded to the extant and emerging draft plan must be considered against the other material considerations that are presented now and that take account of the passage of time.
6. In the absence of continued interest in the land it is considered that significant material weight is given to the updated evidence which describes the economic benefits that might be accrued from bringing forward mixed use development on the land linked to the delivery of the Knockmore Link road and which must be considered in the context of **no** jobs (my emphasis) having been created in the previous ten years.
7. Whilst the WLDF is a non-statutory document, it is material to the decision making process. In an analysis undertaken by Oxford Economics on behalf of the Council and used to inform the preparation of the framework it was indicated that the mixed use development of this land could generate 3,500 employment-class jobs.
8. In addition, Oxford Economics forecasted that the additional spending by new residents will generate 1,300 jobs across the Council area together with a further 1,600 indirect and induced jobs.
9. Whilst many of these jobs will only follow occupation of the new homes, this analysis does point to the significant economic contribution of this scale of development. It also reduces any argument regarding the need for all of the site to be zoned for employment purposes.
10. That said it is also accepted there is no direct alignment between the geographical extent of the study area for the WLDF and this planning application.
11. The ability to secure the level of employment suggested in the Oxford Economics analysis is predicated on at least 50% of the Blaris lands (as identified in draft BMAP) being available for employment use.
12. As stated above approximately 65% of the application site is for uses other than employment. The challenge for the Council in permitting the loss of this amount of land is whether it will assist in the future in realising the full employment potential of the balance of the land by putting in place the necessary road infrastructure.
13. Approximately 50% of the total employment zoning as envisaged in draft BMAP will remain available (excluding the land in the open countryside beyond) to realise the number of jobs projected in the Oxford Economics analysis.
14. The planning applicant has assembled the necessary land to construct the Knockmore Link Road, brought forward a detailed design for the road in a parallel application and a phasing plan that indicates the road will be constructed in parallel with some of the mixed use development as a first phase of development.

The Planning (Notification of Applications) Direction 2017
Statement of Reasons – LA05/2018/1154/O and LA05/2018/1155/F

15. This is a significant material consideration in realising the full potential of West Lisburn as a strategic location for employment and it is of equal importance not to undermine further the RDS policy direction in respect of West Lisburn.
16. The concept plan submitted shows how the proposed housing north of the Blaris Road might be extended into the neighbouring lands. The concept only relates to the application site and is without prejudice to what might come forward on the balance of the lands.
17. The developer chose not to bring forward a framework for all the West Lisburn (Blaris) zoning and has asked for this proposal to be considered on its own merits.
18. It is considered that the balance of the land could still be developed for employment with suitable mitigation in the form of a buffer which provides clear segregation between the neighbouring uses. The housing in the application site is supported by all the necessary transport infrastructure, neighbour facilities and open spaces.
19. It could be regarded that the scheme as proposed is an 'urban village' sitting next to an area of major employment where there is ease of access to future employment opportunity without the need to commute long distances.
20. The concept does **not** prejudice the future development of the West Lisburn (Blaris) land for employment.
21. The weight to be afforded to the monetary contribution that this proposal makes to the local economy in terms of economic benefit is treated with caution and not attached significant weight.
22. In general terms however it is accepted that the development of West Lisburn (Blaris) and the wider land is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for the council area and surrounding region.
23. Beyond the economic impact described, the location of new and additional employment opportunities of scale at West Lisburn (Blaris), has the potential to generate a positive local environmental dividend in Lisburn by reducing the need for individuals to commute outside the council area for employment.
24. The proximity of the site to known areas of deprivation within the council area and to North and West Belfast (two areas of high unemployment), and the enhanced connectivity proposed by the Knockmore M1 Link Road to the motorway network and the Knockmore Rail Halt to the railway network, means that the employment generated at West Lisburn (Blaris) has the potential to provide positive economic impact not just in Lisburn Castlereagh, but in the wider region and beyond.
25. There is no doubt that the construction of the Knockmore Link Road is key to unlocking the economic development potential of West Lisburn (Blaris).

The Planning (Notification of Applications) Direction 2017
Statement of Reasons – LA05/2018/1154/O and LA05/2018/1155/F

26. However a clear strategy as to how the West Lisburn (Blaris) site is required looking forward as to how higher value added commercial land use is secured on this and neighbouring land, that would complement, for example, the RUAS agri-food, agri-tech ambitions for Maze Long Kesh, the digital agenda espoused by Belfast Region City Deal or the UK Industrial Strategy.
27. The road gives the Knockmore Hill, Lissue and Ballinderry Road Industrial Estates direct access to the strategic road network.
28. The Knockmore Link road and orbital bus services will provide increased accessibility to employment opportunity to socially disadvantaged communities within Lisburn City and beyond. A £500,000 contribution to Translink to realise the orbital bus service is weighed as significant.
29. The significance of the proposal in terms of unlocking the potential of the strategic land reserve at the Maze Long Kesh is also recognised.
30. The continued development of land at the Maze amongst other things as a major centre for tourism in terms of operation of the Eikon exhibition centre by the RUAS and the operation of the aviation museum by the Ulster Aviation Society are constrained by the absence of a link to the strategic road network.
31. This is necessary infrastructure and the road as designed allows for this link to be realised in the future and provides impetus for a master plan to come forward for the balance of the land reserve at the Maze.
32. The proposed affordable housing provision at 10% (and not provided for in current policy) will assist in meeting a continued and pressing need in Lisburn City.
33. The proposal complies with the SPPS and PPS3 in that the proposed link road development and associated internal road works will create an accessible environment for everyone and that the access arrangements proposed to the public road and the creation of new accesses to a public road will not prejudice road safety or significantly inconvenience the flow of traffic; nor will the proposal conflict with tests associated with Policy AMP 3 – Access to Protected Routes.
34. It also demonstrates that the proposed development has been designed to encourage sustainable modes of transport and that the use of public transport will be promoted and implemented through Translink incentives. This will significantly improve traffic progression through Lisburn City Centre, provide a direct link to the strategic road network for the west of Lisburn and in doing so, create the opportunity for orbital bus services to connect to the existing radial services.

The Planning (Notification of Applications) Direction 2017
Statement of Reasons – LA05/2018/1154/O and LA05/2018/1155/F

35. The fact that DfI Roads has no objection in principle to this scheme is significant in the context of work on-going in developing a new transport strategy for the Belfast Metropolitan Urban Area.

In respect of application **LA05/2018/1155/F** the Council does not consider the proposal to significantly prejudice the local development plan's policies and objectives for the following reasons:

1. Significant material weight is afforded to the draft plan and PAC inquiry report which identified the proposed road as a developer led road scheme (proposal LC17).
2. The proposal satisfies the policy tests at paragraph 6.297 of the SPPS and key policy tests associated with PPS 3 in that that the proposed access arrangements to the public road and detailed design of the public road will not prejudice road safety or significantly inconvenience the flow of traffic.
3. The environmental impacts of the construction and operation of the road are addressed in the Environmental Statement and associated Addendum. It is demonstrated that the road has the capacity to operate without significant adverse traffic impacts and without creating significant environmental effects.
4. It also demonstrated that the proposed development has been designed to support sustainable modes of transport and public transport facilities.
5. It allows for further improvement to the Sprucefield Park and Ride facility, access from the motorway to the proposed Knockmore Rail Halt and the use of public transport will be promoted through Translink incentives to operate local bus connections into Lisburn City that will significantly improve traffic progression through Lisburn City Centre, provide a direct link to the strategic road network for the west of Lisburn and in doing so, create the opportunity for orbital bus services to connect to the existing radial services.
6. A pedestrian cycle way is also provided with access to the Sustrans cycle network.
7. The strategic economic benefits of the proposed link road as a result of its construction carry significant weight in the assessment of this application. The road gives the Knockmore Hill, Lissue and Ballinderry Road Industrial Estates direct access to the strategic road network.
8. It facilitates the development of West Lisburn (Blaris) as a place for major economic growth. The road is designed to allow future access to the Maze Long Kesh strategic land reserve and the major untapped tourism asset based around the assets cared for by the Ulster Aviation Society.

The Planning (Notification of Applications) Direction 2017
Statement of Reasons – LA05/2018/1154/O and LA05/2018/1155/F

9. The road is a developer led proposal and linked to a proposal for mixed use development. Its construction is indicated to be in one contract, the timing of its delivery must be secured by way of a planning agreement.

From: on behalf of Kerr, Angus
Sent: 26 May 2021 15:30
To: conor.hughes
Subject: Holding Direction Blaris LA05/2018/1154/O & LA05/2018/1155/F
Attachments: Letter to Conor Hughes LCCC re Blaris LA05 2018 1154 O & LA05 2018 1155pdf

Mr Hughes

Please see attached letter from Angus Kerr, Chief Planner & Director of Regional Planning, DfI for your attention.

Kind regards



Personal Secretary for Angus Kerr, Chief Planner & Director of Regional Planning
| Department for Infrastructure
☎ 0300 200 7830

Please consider the environment - do you really need to print this e-mail?

Regional Planning Directorate



Mr Conor Hughes
Head of Planning and Capital Development
Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council
Civic Headquarters
Lagan Valley Island
LISBURN
BT27 4RL
conor.hughes

Clarence Court
10-18 Adelaide Street
BELFAST
BT2 8GB
Tel: 0300 200 7830

Email:

Your reference: LA05/2018/1154/O
LA05/2018/1155/F

Our reference: As above

26 May 2021

Dear Mr Hughes

**PLANNING ACT (NORTHERN IRELAND) 2011
THE PLANNING (GENERAL DEVELOPMENT PROCEDURE) (NORTHERN
IRELAND) ORDER 2015
THE PLANNING (NOTIFICATION OF APPLICATIONS) DIRECTION 2017**

**LA05/2018/1154/O- PROPOSED MIXED USE DEVELOPMENT TO INCLUDE NEW
HOUSING (1300 DWELLINGS) AND COMMERCIAL FLOOR SPACE (754,000
SQUARE FEET) 1.6KM M1-KNOCKMORE LINK ROAD, RIVERSIDE PARKLAND AND
ANCILLARY WORKS & LA05/2018/1155/F- CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW LINK ROAD
(1.6KM) CONNECTING THE EXISTING M1 JUNCTION 8/A101 ROUNDABOUT TO
EXISTING MOIRA/KNOCKMORE ROAD JUNCTION AT LANDS AT BLARIS LISBURN
(LANDS BETWEEN EXISTING M1 JUNCTION 8/A101 ROUNDABOUT AND MOIRA
ROAD/KNOCKMORE ROAD JUNCTION)**

I acknowledge receipt of your Council's notification of 12 May 2021 relating to the above planning applications, in accordance with the directions issued by the Department on 14 January 2019.

The Department hereby directs, under the terms of Article 17 of the Planning (General Development Procedure) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015, that your authority may not grant planning permission for applications LA05/2018/1154/O and LA05/2018/1155/F until further advised in writing by the Department.

The Department has decided to issue this direction to allow it time to consider whether or not the proposed development raises issues that would warrant the referral of the application to it for determination. I can assure you that it is the Department's intention to finalise its consideration of the notification, relating to applications LA05/2018/1154/O and LA05/2018/1155/F, as soon as practicably possible.

Yours sincerely

ANGUS KERR
Chief Planner
& Director of Regional Planning



Department for

Infrastructure

An Roinn

Bonneagair

www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk

**From the office of the Minister for Infrastructure
Nichola Mallon MLA**

Mr. Pat Catney MLA

pat.catney@

Room 708
Clarence Court
10-18 Adelaide Street
BELFAST
BT2 8GB
Telephone: (028) 9054 0105
Email: Private.office@infrastructure-ni.gov.uk

Your reference: N/A
Our reference: COR-1842-2021
15 November 2021

Dear Pat

**BLARIS, LISBURN- PLANNING APPLICATIONS LA05/2018/1154/O AND
LA05/2018/1155/F**

Thank you for your enquiry of 02 November 2021 regarding the above planning applications.

You may be aware that the Department was notified of the above referenced applications by Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council on 12 May 2021, as required following the issuing of notification directions by the Department for both applications on 14 January 2019. The Notification Directions required the council to notify the Department before a decision was issued on the applications so that DfI could decide if it wished to call in the applications. At present there are 'holding' directions in place in relation to the applications which means the council cannot issue a decision until further advised by the Department.

I may advise that the notification referred to above is currently being assessed and, once this has been completed, the Minister will write to the council with a decision as to whether or not the applications should be referred (called in) to the Department for determination.

KATHRYN MCFERRAN
Private Secretary to the Minister

From:

[[mailto:](#)

]

Sent: 10 December 2021 10:30

To: Kerr, Angus

Cc:

;

Subject: RE: Blaris

Caution – This email has been received from outside the NICS network. Please ensure you can verify the sender's name and email address. Treat all attachments and links with caution.

FOR INTERNAL NICS STAFF ONLY - If you have any concerns regarding the email please forward to spam@finance-ni.gov.uk.

Angus

I simply don't understand the secrecy. I can't see why this process isn't transparent. I don't see any other civil servants being afforded such a privilege

Regards

----- Original Message -----

On Friday, December 10th, 2021 at 09:25, Kerr, Angus

< > wrote:

,

The tone and content of your email is noted. As a civil servant I cannot reveal the content of advice to our Minister before she has had the opportunity herself to consider the advice and come to her decision on it.

Regards,

Angus

From:

Sent: 09 December 2021 21:25

To: Kerr, Angus

Cc:

Subject: RE: Blaris

Caution – This email has been received from outside the NICS network.

Please ensure you can verify the sender's name and email address.

Treat all attachments and links with caution.

FOR INTERNAL NICS STAFF ONLY - If you have any concerns regarding the email please forward to spam@finance-ni.gov.uk.

Angus

Id appreciate a reply to my email

Regards

----- Original Message -----

On Wednesday, December 8th, 2021 at 09:25,

> wrote:

Angus

I don't understand the cloak and dagger approach. If you've made a recommendation you should be fit to advise us regardless of what it is

I'm getting a bit bored by all these games. I find it very unprofessional.

Regards

Unfortunately not before the Minister has made her decision .

Angus

From:

Sent: 07 December 2021 10:56

To: Kerr, Angus

Cc:

Subject: RE: Blaris

Caution – This email has been received from outside the NICS network.

Please ensure you can verify the sender's name and email address.

Treat all attachments and links with caution.

FOR INTERNAL NICS STAFF ONLY - If you have any concerns regarding the email please forward to spam@finance-ni.gov.uk.

Noted

Can you confirm what your recommendation to the minister will be?

regards

----- Original Message -----
Tuesday, December 7th, 2021 at 09:34,

Good Morning

We are very nearly there now with the report just waiting final clearance before sending up to Minister.

The Minister will then understandably need some time and space to consider the report and perhaps discuss with officials before she makes her final decision.

Angus

From:]
Sent: 06 December 2021 11:55
To: Kerr, Angus >
Cc:
Subject: RE: Blaris

Caution – This email has been received from outside the NICS network.

Please ensure you can verify the sender's name and email address.

Treat all attachments and links with caution.

FOR INTERNAL NICS STAFF ONLY - If you have any concerns regarding the email please forward to spam@finance-ni.gov.uk.

Good morning Angus

I note from your email two weeks ago that you were expecting the report being issued to the Minister before the end of last week. I note your reference to potential for delays but also boosted by your commitment to place top priority on it.

Unsurprisingly, _____ has chased you and I am following up on that. Are you available for a chat later today? Can you confirm that the report has been completed and issued to the Minister?

I look forward to your response.

Best regards,



■
■ clyde@clydeshanks.com
■ <http://clydeshanks.com>
■

From: Kerr, Angus [<mailto:>]
Sent: 22 November 2021 19:40
To:

Cc:
Subject: RE: Blaris

From:

Sent: 22 November 2021 12:12

To:

Cc: Kerr, Angus

Subject: RE: Blaris

Caution – This email has been received from outside the NICS network.

Please ensure you can verify the sender's name and email address.

Treat all attachments and links with caution.

FOR INTERNAL NICS STAFF ONLY - If you have any concerns regarding the email please forward to spam@finance-ni.gov.uk.

Angus

An update would be appreciated

Regards

Good morning Angus,

I left a voicemail message for you just now.

Having now received your legal advice and had a few days to consider its content could you please provide an update on completion of your report/recommendation and a timeline relating to engagement with the Minister.

That would be very helpful.

Many thanks

Clyde Shanks

CLYDE SHANKS

www.clydeshanks.com

Clyde Shanks Ltd is registered in Northern Ireland, Company No. 606619. Registered office address: 10 Pilots View, Heron Road, Belfast, BT3 9LE. The information in this message is confidential or protected by law. If you are not the intended recipient, please contact the sender and delete this message. Any unauthorised copying of this message or unauthorised distribution of the information contained herein is prohibited. Although Clyde Shanks Ltd has taken steps to ensure that this email and attachments are free from any virus, good computing practice means that the recipient should ensure they actually are virus free.

Good Morning ,

Just to confirm that we received the legal advice this morning.

Regards,

Angus

From: Kerr, Angus
Sent: 10 November 2021 10:02
To:
Cc:
Subject: RE: Blaris

Apologies for the delay in replying – I’ve been trying to get an update from Counsel on when to expect the advice.

I have now received this and Counsel has advised this morning that “I’ll have advice with you by the weekend.” In my experience of Counsel that means Sunday night!

I am happy to confirm receipt next Monday morning if you remind me and we will then need some time to consider the advice and finalise our report to the Minister next week.

Thanks,

Angus

From:
Sent: 09 November 2021 12:28
To: Kerr, Angus

Cc:
Subject: RE: Blaris

Caution – This email has been received from outside the NICS network.

Please ensure you can verify the sender's name and email address.

Treat all attachments and links with caution.

FOR INTERNAL NICS STAFF ONLY - If you have any concerns regarding the email please forward to spam@finance-ni.gov.uk.

Good afternoon Angus,

I have just left a message on your mobile voicemail and grateful if you could come back to me on my mobile before cop today . From our last discussion, I understand the Department was expecting Counsel opinion last week following the half-term break. I am meeting with clients tomorrow and would be most grateful for an update on DfI's position.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Best regards,

Clyde Shanks

CLYDE SHANKS

www.clydeshanks.com

Clyde Shanks Ltd is registered in Northern Ireland, Company No. 606619. Registered office address: 10 Pilots View, Heron Road, Belfast, BT3 9LE. The information in this message is confidential or protected by law. If you are not the intended recipient, please contact the sender and delete this message. Any unauthorised copying of this message or unauthorised distribution of the information contained herein is

prohibited. Although Clyde Shanks Ltd has taken steps to ensure that this email and attachments are free from any virus, good computing practice means that the recipient should ensure they actually are virus free.

From:

Sent: 08 November 2021 17:42

To: Kerr, Angus

Cc:

Subject: Re: Blaris

Good evening Angus

I would be very grateful for a response to my email below.

That would be much appreciated.

Kind regards,

Clyde Shanks

www.clydeshanks.com

Clyde Shanks Ltd is registered in Northern Ireland, Company No. 606619. Registered office address: 10 Pilots View, Heron Road, Belfast, BT3 9LE. The information in this message is confidential or protected by law. If you are not the intended recipient, please contact the sender and delete this message. Any unauthorised copying of this message or unauthorised distribution of the information contained herein is prohibited. Although Clyde Shanks Ltd has taken steps to ensure that this email and attachments are free from any virus, good computing practice means that the recipient should ensure they actually are virus free.

On 4 Nov 2021, at 16:02,

> wrote:

Good afternoon Angus

I have a meeting with Neptune Carleton early next week and would be grateful if you can advise whether you have received the legal advice you referred to two weeks ago. I'd be grateful if you could please provide an update on where DfI Officers have progressed matters to.

Many thanks

Clyde Shanks

<image001.jpg>

www.clydeshanks.com

Clyde Shanks Ltd is registered in Northern Ireland, Company No. 606619. Registered office address: 10 Pilots View, Heron Road, Belfast, BT3 9LE. The information in this message is confidential or protected by law. If you are not the intended recipient, please contact the sender and delete this message. Any unauthorised copying of this message or unauthorised distribution of the information contained herein is prohibited. Although Clyde Shanks Ltd has taken steps to ensure that this email and attachments are free from any virus, good computing practice means that the recipient should ensure they actually are virus free.

I am sorry you do not find my response helpful. I have explained the position as it is and made clear that this case will be concluded as soon as possible. I have also endeavoured to respond as quickly and honestly as I can to the queries on this case.

The Department will make its decision on this when it has all the information and advice it needs in order to do so.

Regards,

Angus

From:

[[mailto](#)

Sent: 20 October 2021 17:06

To: Kerr, Angus

Cc:

Subject: RE: Blaris

Caution – This email has been received from outside the NICS network.

Please ensure you can verify the sender's name and email address.

Treat all attachments and links with caution.

If you have any concerns regarding the email please forward to spam@finance-ni.gov.uk.

Angus

Not a very helpful response

Perhaps we need a face to face discussion but to be frank Im unimpressed with your email below!!!!

I'll call you tomorrow to arrange.

Regards

On Wed, Oct 20, 2021 at 10:11, Kerr, Angus
wrote:

,

I have been clear throughout this process that we are working as quickly as we can on this complex case.

You pressed me for timeframes and I did my best to estimate these whilst always caveating this by the fact that issues may arise requiring further information and consideration. That is what has happened in this case.

Jurisdiction for this application remains with the Council and they will be informed of our decision as soon as it is taken. Therefore, please direct future correspondence on this matter to the Council.

Kind regards,

Angus

From:

Sent: 19 October 2021 20:34

To: Kerr, Angus

Cc:

Subject: Re: Blaris

Caution – This email has been received from outside the NICS network.

Please ensure you can verify the sender's name and email address.

Treat all attachments and links with caution.

If you have any concerns regarding the email please forward to spam@finance-ni.gov.uk.

Angus

It's been with you for almost six months and it is disappointing that you cannot provide a definitive timeline or provide any explanation of where you have progressed to or what legal advice you require.

You previously suggested your report to the Minister would be completed by 30 Sept and now three weeks later you say you await legal advice.

Please can you do what you said you were going to do, get on with it and complete your review.

That would be much appreciated.

Kind regards,

Clyde Shanks

www.clydeshanks.com

Clyde Shanks Ltd is registered in Northern Ireland, Company No. 606619. Registered office address: 10 Pilots View, Heron Road, Belfast, BT3 9LE. The information in this message is confidential or protected by law. If you are not the intended recipient, please contact the sender and delete this message. Any unauthorised copying of this message or unauthorised distribution of the information contained herein is prohibited. Although Clyde Shanks Ltd has taken steps to ensure that this email and attachments are free from any virus, good computing practice means that the recipient should ensure they actually are virus free.

On 19 Oct 2021, at 18:22, Kerr, Angus
wrote:

>

Unfortunately, I am unable to clarify the legal advice. All I can say is that I am pushing as hard as I can to get it as quickly as I can.

Thanks,

angus

From:

Sent: 18 October 2021 11:01

To: Kerr, Angus

Cc:

Subject: RE: Blaris

Caution – This email has been received from outside the NICS network.

Please ensure you can verify the sender's name and email address.

Treat all attachments and links with caution.

If you have any concerns regarding the email please forward to spam@finance-ni.gov.uk.

Thanks Angus

Can you please clarify what the legal advice is based on that you are waiting for?

Clyde Shanks

<image001.jpg>

www.clydeshanks.com

Clyde Shanks Ltd is registered in Northern Ireland, Company No. 606619. Registered office address: 10 Pilots View, Heron Road, Belfast, BT3 9LE. The information in this message is confidential or protected by law. If you are not the intended recipient, please contact the sender and delete this message. Any unauthorised copying of this message or unauthorised distribution of the information contained herein is prohibited. Although Clyde Shanks Ltd has taken steps to ensure that this email and attachments are free from any virus, good computing

practice means that the recipient should ensure they actually are virus free.

From: Kerr, Angus
Sent: 18 October 2021 10:57
To:
Cc:

Subject: RE: Blaris

Good morning ,

Unfortunately the officer report is still not quite complete. We are awaiting further legal input. Once this is received we will be finalising the report. I would anticipate doing so next week at the latest – when we receive the input is outside my control.

We are pressing this forward as quickly as we can and I will let you both know when it is complete.

Angus

From:
Sent: 18 October 2021 10:17
To: Kerr, Angus
Cc:
Subject: RE: Blaris

Caution – This email has been received from outside the NICS network.

Please ensure you can verify the sender's name and email address.

Treat all attachments and links with caution.

If you have any concerns regarding the email please forward to spam@finance-ni.gov.uk.

Good morning Angus

Grateful if you would come back on my email below and the voicemail I left a few moments ago. I am following up on the call you had with two weeks ago today. Please can you confirm the officer report is complete and recommendation on approach to the Minister has been issued.

Many thanks

Clyde Shanks

<image001.jpg>

www.clydeshanks.com

Clyde Shanks Ltd is registered in Northern Ireland, Company No. 606619. Registered office address: 10 Pilots View, Heron Road, Belfast, BT3 9LE. The information in this message is confidential or protected by law. If you are not the intended recipient, please contact the sender and delete this message. Any unauthorised copying of this message or unauthorised distribution of the information contained herein is prohibited. Although Clyde Shanks Ltd has taken steps to ensure that this email and attachments are free from any virus, good computing practice means that the recipient should ensure they actually are virus free.

From:

Sent: 14 October 2021 19:41

To: Angus Kerr

Subject: Blaris

Good evening Angus

Grateful if you could please confirm progress on completing your report. I will phone you on Monday and hope to get clarity on Dfi completing its review.

Many thanks

Kind regards,

Clyde Shanks

Clyde Shanks

www.clydeshanks.com

Clyde Shanks Ltd is registered in Northern Ireland, Company No. 606619. Registered office address: 10 Pilots View, Heron Road, Belfast, BT3 9LE. The information in this message is confidential or protected by law. If you are not the intended recipient, please contact the sender and delete this message. Any unauthorised copying of this message or unauthorised distribution of the information contained herein is prohibited. Although Clyde Shanks Ltd has taken steps to ensure that this email and attachments are free from any virus, good computing practice means that the recipient should ensure they actually are virus free.

From: Nelson, Aileen
Sent: 14 December 2021 15:36
To: Dfl Private Office
Cc: Godfrey, Katrina (Dfl – Perm Sec); Thompson, Julie; Kerr, Angus; Beggs, Alistair; Symington, Scott; McGrady, Fiona; Marshall, Niall; Watson, Stephen (planning); Wilson, Andrew (PLANNING); Hinds, Sandra; McCartan, Fiona; Dfl PG Secretariat; Dfl Press Office; Orr, Gillian; Monaghan, Kevin
Subject: Submission to Minister Recommending 'Call In' of Blaris Planning Applications- Routine
Attachments: Sub to Minister LCCC RE Blaris LA05 2018 1154 O & LA05 2018 1155 F- Modified 19 Oct.tr5; Appendix 1- Blaris Notification Assessment Report- LA05 2018 1154 O & LA05 2018 1155 F- Modified 19 Oct.tr5; Appendix 2- Blaris- LCCC s Statement of Reasons.PDF; Sub to Minister LCCC RE Blaris LA05 2018 1154 O & LA05 2018 1155 F- Modified 19 Oct.DOCX; Appendix 1- Blaris Notification Assessment Report- LA05 2018 1154 O & LA05 ~ Modified 19 Oct.DOCX; Appendix 3- LEGAL SENSITIVE- Advice from legal counsel- Philip McAteer BL- RE Blaris.DOCX

Private Office

Please see attached submission and associated appendices for the Minister's consideration.

Many thanks

Aileen

Aileen Nelson | Principal Planning Officer | Operational Governance & Oversight Team | Regional Planning Directorate | Department for Infrastructure

Internal Memo

From: Angus Kerr
Regional Planning Directorate

Your Ref:
Our Ref: SUB-1012-2021

Tel:

Date: 14 December 2021

To: 1. Nichola Mallon MLA
Minister for Infrastructure

cc: Copy distribution below

RECOMMENDATION TO MINISTER TO 'CALL IN' PLANNING APPLICATIONS LA05/2018/1154/O AND LA05/2018/1155/F (BLARIS) FROM LISBURN AND CASTLEREAGH CITY COUNCIL

Decision Required



For Information Only



Issue:

Your Department has been notified by Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council (LCCC) of its intention to grant approval for an outline and associated full planning application for a proposed mixed use development and proposed new link road at Blaris, Lisburn. A decision is required as to whether or not the applications should be 'called in' for determination.

Timescale:

Routine- It is important to make this decision as soon as possible to avoid any delays in the planning process.

Presentational Issues:

There has been media interest in this application.

FOI Implications:

At the time of drafting the submission is likely to be fully disclosable;

Financial Implications:

N/A

Legislative Implications:

N/A

Section 75 Implications:	N/A
Executive Referral:	There is no need to refer the issue to the Executive.
Special Adviser's comments:	
Recommendation:	That you: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Take the decision to 'call in' applications LA05/2018/1154/O and LA05/2018/1155/F to your Department for further scrutiny and determination.• If you decide to 'call in' the applications, agree for officials to issue referral Directions to LCCC.

BACKGROUND

1. The purpose of this submission is to recommend the 'call in' of applications LA05/2018/1154/O & LA05/2018/1155/F and to seek your decision on this matter.
2. These major applications were received by LCCC on 12 November 2018. The proposal includes an outline application and a full application. The outline application, LA05/2018/1154/O, has a site area of 111.74 hectares and is for a mixed use development to include new housing (1300 dwellings) and commercial floor space (754,000 square feet), 1.6km M1-Knockmore link road, riverside parkland and ancillary works. The full planning application, LA05/2011/1155/F, is for construction of a new link road (1.6km / 17.6 hectares) connecting the existing M1 junction 8/A101 roundabout to existing Moira/Knockmore Road junction at lands at Blaris, Lisburn.
3. A pre-determination hearing / special meeting of the council's Planning Committee took place on 22 March 2021. A Planning Committee meeting was then held on 12 April 2021 at which recommendations to approve both applications were presented by the council's planners. The Planning Committee agreed with its planning officers' recommendation of approval and resolved to approve the applications.

4. Your Department was notified of the applications by LCCC on 12 May 2021, as required following the issuing of notification directions by DfI for both applications on 14 January 2019. The notification directions of 2019 required the council to notify your Department before a decision was issued on the applications so that your Department could decide if it wished to call in the applications. It was considered at the time that the issuing of the 2019 notification directions was important given the scale and strategic significance of the proposal.

5. In terms of the plan context, the site lies outside the settlement limit of the council's extant Local Development Plan (LDP), the Lisburn Area Plan 2001, and in the open countryside. A significant part of the site also lies outside the development limit in the draft Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan (dBMAP) 2015. The part of the site lying within the settlement limit is within dBMAP's employment zoning employment land LC07. The land within the red line boundary of the outline application, to the west of the Knockmore Road, lies outside the designated employment zoning and in the open countryside.

6. In terms of the council's emerging LDP, a large portion of this site forms part of a designation in the council's draft Plan Strategy (dPS) as a 'Strategic Mixed Use Site at West Lisburn / Blaris (SMU01)' whilst the remainder lies outside the settlement limit for Lisburn (**see maps in Appendix 1**). The Lisburn Draft Plan Strategy Map Viewer suggests a proposed development limit which accords with the proposed route of the M1- Knockmore Link Rd which does not reflect the boundary of the outline planning application site. The applicant has, however, indicated in its planning statement that the dPS will be subject to objection by the applicant and has limited weight given the early stage it has reached. You will be aware that your Department has recently written to the Planning Appeals Commission (PAC) causing the Independent Examination (IE) into LCCC's dPS. The PAC has recently appointed a Commissioner to this Examination.

7. In terms of the Regional Development Strategy (RDS) 2035, West Lisburn/Blaris is addressed specifically at Spatial Framework Guidance 1 (SFG1) which states that these key locations should be identified and protected for economic growth. Regional Guidance 1 (RG1) of the RDS highlights the need to protect zoned land, and states that land zoned for economic development use in development plans should be protected as it provides a valuable resource for local and external investment.
8. The agent and applicant for the applications, and also the Head of Planning at the council, have sought numerous updates on the timescales for your Department's decision in relation to these notified applications. They are aware that we have sought legal advice to inform our decision (although not on which issues) and that we would soon be sending this submission to you for your consideration and decision. You will also be aware that Pat Catney MLA has also sought an update. In addition, Belfast City Council (BCC) has written to your Department to highlight its concerns regarding LCCC's intention to approve the applications, particularly in advance of the IE and has requested that 'call in' is considered.
9. In terms of the legislative and policy context, you will be aware that Section 29(1) of the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 (the 2011 Act) states as follows:-

“29 - Call in of applications, etc., to Department

(1) The Department may give directions requiring applications for planning permission made to a council, or applications for the approval of a council of any matter required under a development order, to be referred to it instead of being dealt with by councils.

10. Paragraphs 5.59 and 5.60 of the Strategic Planning Policy Statement (SPPS) provide as follows:

“Call-in

5.59 *The Department has powers to direct that certain applications be referred to it rather than being dealt with by councils. This provides a necessary safeguard where there are applications that raise issues of such importance that their impact is considered to extend to a sub-regional or regional level. It is anticipated that these powers would only be used in exceptional circumstances as it is recognised that councils are best placed to deal with the vast majority of applications within their own council areas.*

5.60 *In addition to the general power to call-in a planning application, councils are required to notify the Department in instances where they propose to grant planning permission for certain types of development as set out in a direction. These could include, for example, a major development application which would significantly prejudice the implementation of the LDP objectives and policies or where councils have an interest in the land.”*

11. Development Management Practice Note 13 ‘Notification and Call-In’ also provides good practice guidance on the ‘call in’ procedures. Paragraph 3.1 emphasises that *“In practice applications will be called in by exception, ...”*. Paragraph 3.2 continues:

“3.2 There may be circumstances where the proposed development raises issues of such importance that they could be considered to have a significant regional impact, regardless of falling below the threshold for regionally significant development, or it may be considered the Department is a more appropriate authority to determine the application.”

12. Regional Planning Directorate (RPD) has concluded its assessment of the notified applications. As with all notification assessments, the planning merits of the application (i.e. if the application should be approved or refused) are not considered at this stage. The consideration at this point is based on whether or not the applications raise issues of such importance that their impact is considered to extend to a sub-regional or regional level and which constitute exceptional circumstances, to the extent that it is more appropriate for your Department to assume the role of decision maker. If the applications were to be called in, it is only then that the full planning merits of the applications would be assessed.
13. Officials also sought advice from counsel on both the draft submission and assessment (**Appendix 1**) before submitting same to you for your consideration and decision. The legal advice has been included at **Appendix 3**.
14. At present there are 'holding' directions in place for both applications which means the council cannot issue a decision until further advised by your Department.
15. The Director of Strategic Planning has sought counsel advice, further to the recent interconnector judgement, on decisions regarding the 'call in' of planning applications to your Department.

16. In light of the above, I would therefore recommend that the matter does not require referral to the Executive Committee on the factual basis set out – i.e. that the bare decision to call in does not require referral to the EC as it is not significant, controversial or cross-cutting in Northern Ireland Act terms, having regard to all the circumstances and in particular the fact that the decision is only a step in the overall planning process and does not determine the planning application.

DETAIL

17. RPD's assessment is attached at **Appendix 1** and includes a consideration of the notification letter and statement of reasons (**Appendix 2**) provided by LCCC as well as the council's Planning Officer's report and the Planning Committee minutes.
18. The council's Development Management Officer's Report (DMOR) sets out an assessment of the proposal against the relevant plans and planning policies and includes a consideration of the representations received. Most consultation responses have recommended certain conditions and informatives are attached to any future planning approvals.
19. DfI Roads is a statutory consultee in this process and has provided responses to the council accordingly in its consultee capacity. It stated in its last response to the council 'the Department is content that the developer has adequately addressed the traffic impacts of their proposed development' and has recommended conditions that could be added if the application were to be approved. RPD officials met with DfI Roads officials to inform them that the notifications were under consideration and to ascertain if there may be

any implications for the Road's programme of work if it was decided that the applications would be called in. DfI Roads confirmed that they were not aware of any programmed divisional projects that would be impacted by such a decision.

20. Northern Ireland Water (NIW) has indicated in its final response, that the Water Network Capacity Check has been completed and has identified a solution for this proposal. NIW also indicated that, in relation to the foul network capacity check, the scheme is predicted to cause flooding detriment at a manhole downstream and surcharge detriment at 45 other manholes and, due to the predicted detriment, option development is required in the next stage of this study. Depending on the options taken forward, flooding, surcharge and spill treatment should be reassessed. NIW recognised that this will take some considerable time and would not be completed before the outline application had been determined. It has in this instance therefore provided a condition to be attached to any planning approval that requires the submission of details of the drainage proposals for the disposal and treatment of foul sewage to be agreed at Reserved Matters stage. NIW also confirmed, when questioned at the Planning Committee meeting, that it was not aware of the nature of the final solutions at this stage.

21. Overall the council has acknowledged that the application, insofar as it comprises a residential element, is not consistent with the regional strategic direction offered in the RDS and is contrary to the general policy thrust set out in the SPPS and policy PED 7 (Retention of Zoned Land and Economic Development Uses) of PPS 4 (Planning and Economic Development), in that it will result in the loss of land zoned for economic development uses. The council has mentioned the passage of time since the RDS was published and no employment uses having come forward. It has also placed weight on the West Lisburn Development Framework, a non-statutory document commissioned by the council, as evidence to support the approval of the applications. The strategic economic benefits of the proposed link road have been allocated significant weight in the assessment of this application by

LCCC and a justification for the council's departure from the local development plan, dBMAP and associated PAC Inquiry Report. The council has indicated that the link road is still regarded by your Department as 'developer led' and the developer is proposing to invest £12m in order to deliver the road. The council's willingness to secure the 'developer led' Knockmore Link Road has been evident throughout the report and there are references to this being a 'once in a lifetime opportunity.'

Potential regional/sub-regional impacts and exceptional circumstances which warrant further scrutiny by your Department

22. In assessing the notifications, and in keeping with paragraph 5.59 of the SPPS, the key questions which officials have asked are as follows: - **Are these applications that raise issues of such importance that their impact is considered to extend to a sub-regional or regional level and are the circumstances of this case exceptional such as to render use of the power to call in appropriate?**

23. After careful consideration of the notified applications, and the detailed assessment provided by the council, it is considered that the outline application, LA05/2018/1154/O, raises several issues of such importance that their impact is considered to extend to a sub-regional or regional level and the circumstances of this case are considered exceptional to warrant further scrutiny by your Department through the use of its call in powers under section 29 of the 2011 Act.

24. The areas where further scrutiny is recommended relate predominantly to the potential regional/sub regional impacts of this proposal on the implementation of the plan- led system and also on the consistent application of regional planning policy and have been set out below:

Potential regional/sub-regional impacts on existing and emerging LDP and plan led system

25. Since 2015, Northern Ireland has been operating a plan-led system, similar to other jurisdictions, which gives primacy to the local development plan. *Section 6(4) of The Planning Act (NI) 2011 states that in making any determination under the Act, 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.* This therefore establishes a plan-led system by giving the local development plan primacy in the context of making a planning determination under the 2011 Act. This includes the determination of a planning application, in that regard has to be had to the plan and the determination must be made in accordance with it unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
26. In this instance, the council have resolved to approve a major proposal (mixed use development to include new housing (1300 dwellings) and commercial floor space (754,000 square feet) 1.6km M1-Knockmore Link Road, riverside parkland and ancillary works) which is contrary to the extant local development plan as the subject lands are outside of the settlement limit shown in the Lisburn Area Plan 2001 and a significant part is outside of the settlement limit proposed by dBMAP. The council's resolution to approve the applications is also contrary to the PAC Report, that followed the dBMAP Inquiry, which strongly advised against the use of the subject lands for housing and added that this area was far from ideal for housing purposes in view of its relatively isolated location from other housing and the fact that it is surrounded by major employment uses, retail development and roads infrastructure. The Inquiry Report concluded that no part of this zoning or any additional lands around the zoning should be allocated for housing. It is considered that the potential impacts of the proposal on the existing local development plan and the potential for this proposal to constitute a major development application which could significantly prejudice the

implementation of the local development plan's objectives and policies requires further scrutiny by your Department.

27. Furthermore, you will be aware that the council is also bringing forward its new Local Development Plan and has been engaging with DfI's Strategic Planning Division (Plan Oversight Team) at key stages of the process. Your Department has recently requested that the PAC cause the IE into the council's draft Plan Strategy. Part of this site has been identified in the emerging plan within a proposed designation and any proposals for this area will be tested for soundness at the IE. It is considered that further scrutiny is required into the potential for this planning decision to be premature by prejudicing the outcome of the emerging plan process by possibly predetermining decisions that ought to be taken following full consideration of the relevant issues at an IE. In addition, if this issue of potential prematurity is not fully explored it could have possible regional implications on the implementation of the plan-led system and it is therefore considered that this requires further scrutiny by your Department.

Potential regional/sub regional impacts on implementation of RDS

28. The outline application proposes that around 65% of the site will be for non-economic development which conflicts with the RDS designation whereby West Lisburn/Blaris are addressed specifically at SFG 1 as key locations that should be identified and protected for economic growth. RG1 of the RDS highlights the need to protect zoned land, and states that land zoned for economic development use in development plans should be protected as it provides a valuable resource for local and external investment. The potential implications of this for the implementation of the RDS is therefore considered to require further scrutiny by your Department.

Potential regional/sub-regional impacts on implementation of planning policy

29. Paragraph 6.89 of the SPPS states that planning permission should not normally be granted for proposals that would result in the loss of land zoned for economic development use and that any decision to reallocate such zoned land to other uses ought to be made through the LDP process. It is considered that the applications raise issues relating to the implementation of planning policy which could have potential regional/sub-regional implications if they are not fully explored. This refers particularly to the SPPS (para 6.61-6.78 (Development in the Countryside), para 6.79-6.98 (Economic Development, Industry and Commerce) as well as PPS4 (Planning and Economic Development) and PPS21 (Sustainable Development in the Countryside). The potential implications for the implementation of regional planning policy are therefore considered to require further scrutiny by the Department.

Lack of robust evidential basis relating to housing need

30. It is considered that there is a gap in the council's assessment relating to housing need, in particular, there appears to be a lack of an evidential base or robust justification as to why this need cannot be currently met elsewhere within the plan area and why there is a need to release further land beyond the settlement limit for development which requires further scrutiny by your Department.

Summary

31. Overall, in relation to the areas identified above, if your Department accepts the way in which the LDP, RDS, dBMAP have been set aside without further assessment it could result in the potential setting of a precedent which could compromise the integrity of the plan-led system, and could potentially weaken the application of regional planning policy in the future. It is therefore recommended that the applications require further scrutiny by your Department to ensure all matters are fully explored before a decision is taken.

32. It is important to be aware that if the applications are called in, your Department may face criticism from the council and developer because of perceived delays in the planning process, for a proposal which they consider could result in economic benefits for the area due to the proposed construction of the 'developer led' link road. They may also consider that any delay could jeopardise the development of the 'developer led' link road. The applicant has indicated to me in a recent email (23 November 2021) they have secured funding for the road link and intend to go to tender early 2022.
33. It is important to note that, should the application be called in, your Department will proceed to process the application with an open mind and this may (or may not) ultimately result in a grant of planning permission. The decision to 'call in' is entirely without prejudice to your Department's ultimate decision on the actual applications. You will be aware that all applications 'called in' to your Department are processed by the Strategic Planning Directorate and not the Regional Planning Directorate in order to keep the decision making process separate from the notification and 'call in' process.
34. Further to the questions set out in paragraph 22 of this submission, and in keeping with paragraph 5.59 of the SPPS, I consider that the outline application, LA05/2018/1154/O, raises issues of such importance that their impact is considered to extend to a sub-regional or regional level and the circumstances of this case are exceptional such as to render it appropriate to use the power to call in, under Section 29 of the Planning Act 2011, for the reasons summarised above. I consider that the outline application, in particular, has the potential to have regional/sub regional implications for the implementation of the RDS, the local development plan for the area (Lisburn Area Plan 2001), dBMAP and also regional planning policy contained within the Strategic Planning Policy Statement and Planning Policy Statements if all matters are not fully considered. Fundamentally, the development has the potential to impact on the current development plan process with regards to the existing and emerging LDP for LCCC and there are concerns that this

could possibly impact on the effective implementation of the plan-led system and this, therefore, requires further scrutiny.

35. Therefore, as envisaged by the previous Executive when this important safeguard was designed into the reformed two-tier planning system, it is considered appropriate and reasonable that your Department assumes the role of decision-maker in this instance. I would recommend that it would be important for the associated full application, relating to the Knockmore Link Road proposal, to also be 'called in' so that there is a consistent and comprehensive approach and in order that the applications can be processed in parallel.
36. With respect to the question of Executive Referral under the Ministerial Code read in conjunction with section 28A of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 ("NIA"), having received counsel advice (para 15 above), I would therefore recommend that the matter does not require referral to the Executive Committee on the factual basis set out – i.e. that the bare decision to call in does not require referral to the EC as it is not significant, controversial or cross-cutting in Northern Ireland Act terms, having regard to all the circumstances and in particular the fact that the decision is only a step in the overall planning process and does not determine the planning application.
37. It is recommended that, if you were minded to 'call in' these applications, the proposed 'call in' reason on the associated Direction(s) should read as follows:-

'The Department has given this Direction in view of the proposed development's potential conflict with the Regional Development Strategy 2035, the local development plan for the area (Lisburn Area Plan 2001) the draft Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan 2015, regional planning policy contained within the Strategic Planning Policy Statement and Planning Policy Statements and the potential for the proposed development to impact on the implementation of the plan-led

system. It is therefore considered to be an exceptional case and that the regional and sub-regional issues raised would benefit from further scrutiny by the Department.'

RECOMMENDATION

38. That you:

- Take the decision to 'call in' applications LA05/2018/1154/O and LA05/2018/1155/F to your Department for further scrutiny and determination.
- If you decide to 'call in' the applications, agree for officials to issue referral Directions to LCCC.

Angus Kerr
Chief Planner & Director
of Regional Planning

Copy List:

Katrina Godfrey
Julie Thompson
Angus Kerr
Alistair Beggs
Scott Symington
Aileen Nelson
Fiona McGrady
Kevin Monaghan
Sandra Hinds

Gillian Orr
DfI Press Office

**Regional Planning Directorate – Notification Assessment of Applications
LA05/2018/1154/O & LA05/2018/1155/F (Blaris, Lisburn)**

Planning Application Reference No(s):	LA05/2018/1154/O & LA05/2018/1155/F
Application Details:	<p>LA05/2018/1154/O- Proposed mixed use development to include new housing (1300 dwellings) and commercial floor space (754,000 square feet) 1.6km M1-Knockmore Link Road, riverside parkland and ancillary works</p> <p>LA05/2018/1155/F- Construction of a new link road (1.6km) connecting the existing M1 Junction 8/A101 roundabout to existing Moira/Knockmore Road Junction at lands at Blaris, Lisburn (lands between existing M1 Junction 8/A101 roundabout and Moira Road/Knockmore Road Junction)</p>
Site Address:	Lands at Blaris, Lisburn (lands between existing M1 Junction 8/ A101 roundabout and Moira Road/ Knockmore Road Junction)
Application classification:	Major Development
Applicant:	Neptune Carleton LLP
Planning Authority:	Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council (LCCC)
Reason for Notification:	Notification was required by LCCC following the issuing of ‘notification’ directions by DfI on 14 January 2019 for applications LA05/2018/1154/O and LA05/2018/1155/F. The directions were made under the provisions of Articles 17 and 18 of The Planning (General Development Procedure) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015.
Representations:	There were two objections to each application and 1 letter of support relating to the full / link road application. One objection was withdrawn.
Date Notified to Department:	12 May 2021 (A ‘holding direction’ was issued by the Department on the 26 May 2021 and is in place to allow the Department time to consider whether or not to ‘call in’ the applications and to prevent the council making a decision on the above applications until it has heard further from the Department).
Date of Recommendation:	26 November 2021
DfI Case Officer	Niall Marshall
RPD recommendation	Recommend referral of application to DfI (Prepare submission to Minister recommending ‘call in’ and seeking a decision on the matter)

1.0 Background

- 1.1 The Department for Infrastructure (DfI) was notified on 12 May 2021 by LCCC, following the issuing of notification directions by DfI for applications LA05/2018/1154/O and LA05/2018/1155/F on 14 January 2019.

1.2 Both planning applications were submitted to LCCC on 12 November 2018. The council held a pre-determination hearing for the applications on 22 March 2021. On 12 April 2021, the Planning Committee agreed with its planning officers' recommendation and resolved to approve the applications.

1.3 A third party 'call in' request was also received by the Department from Aidan Thatcher, Director of Planning and Building Control, Belfast City Council, on 2nd April 2021. This correspondence is dealt with later in the report (Para 13.1).

2.0 Description of proposal and site

2.1 The site covers an extensive area of land (approximately 112 hectares) to the west of Lisburn, between Lisburn and Sprucefield and is 2.5 km from Lisburn city centre. The site is predominantly rural in nature with some detached residential properties and buildings throughout. The proposal includes two planning applications, an outline application and a full application. The outline application, (LA05/2011/1154/O), is for a mixed use development to include new housing (1300 dwellings) and commercial floor space (754,000 square feet) 1.6km M1-Knockmore link road, riverside parkland and ancillary works. The full planning application, LA05/2011/1155/F, is for construction of a new link road (1.6km / 17.6 hectares) connecting the existing M1 junction 8/A101 roundabout to existing Moira/Knockmore Road junction at lands at Blaris, Lisburn.

2.2 The Concept Masterplan submitted with the application to the council advised that the main aspects of the outline proposal are as follows:

- A residential neighbourhood with a maximum of 1300 dwellings;
- Neighbourhood facilities including local food retail, leisure services, offices, community and other local non-residential uses;
- New business uses up to a maximum floor area of 754,000 square feet for B1a, B1b, B1c and B2 employment/business uses and sui generis uses;
- A hotel and restaurant;
- A retained and expanded park and ride; and

- Open spaces including a river park with cycle / walkways, local parks and green corridors to integrate with proposed housing north of Blaris Road.

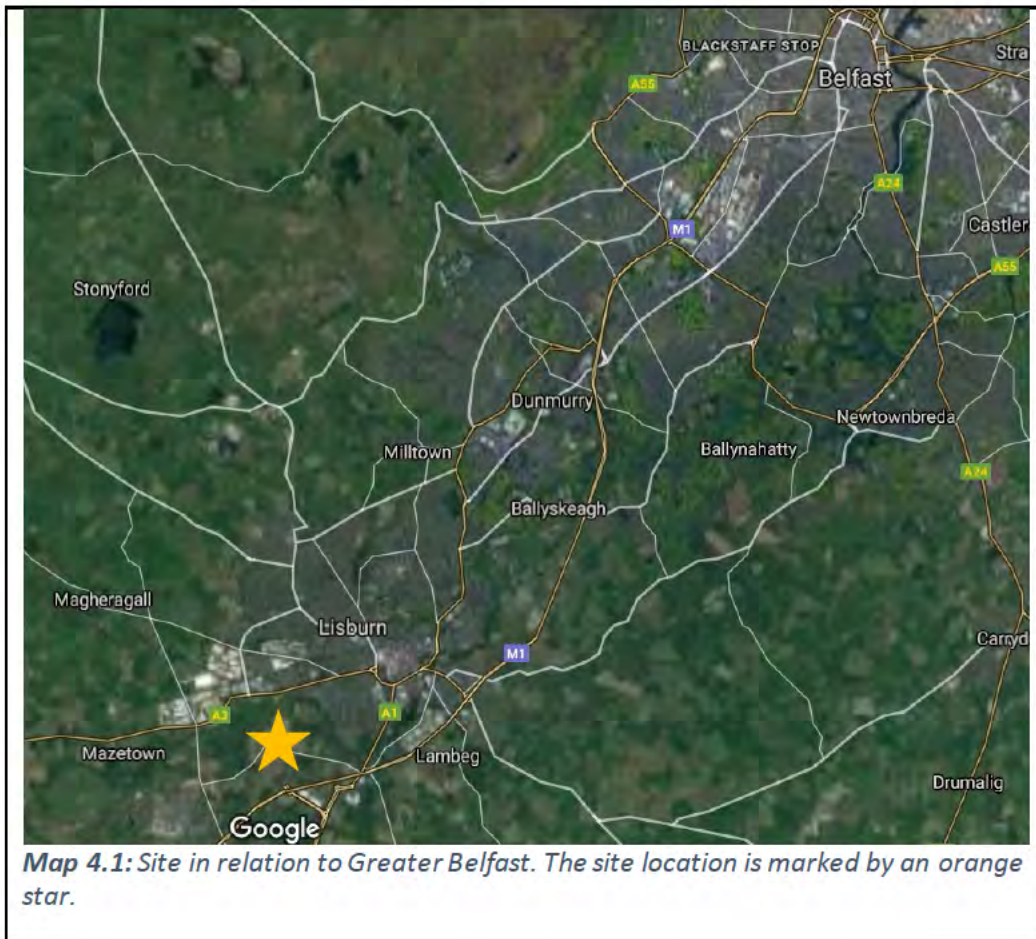
2.3 The new road proposed in the associated full application is 1.6 km in length and would connect the existing M1/A101 roundabout to the Moira Road at its junction with the Knockmore Road. The proposed phasing plan indicates that the road would be constructed in parallel with some of the mixed use development as a first phase of development. It is proposed by the council to secure this, and other phasing matters, through a Section 76 agreement.

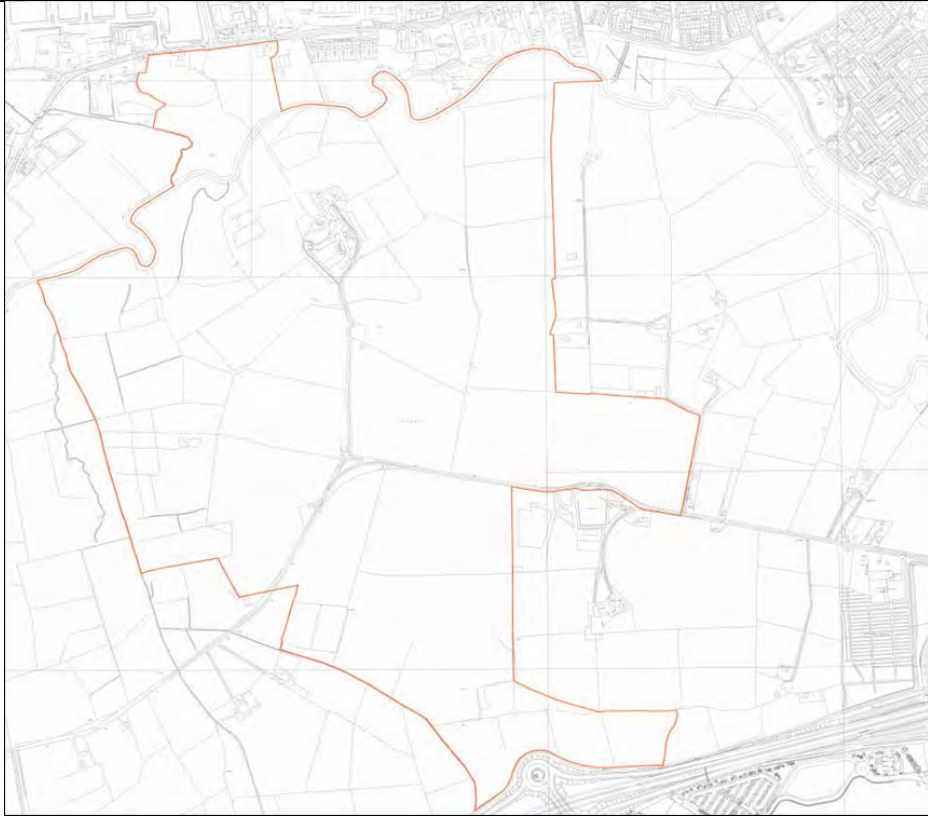
3.0 Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)

3.1 A voluntary environmental statement (ES) accompanied the planning applications and a voluntary addendum to the ES was received by LCCC on 5 November 2019. The addendum includes amendments to the masterplan and consideration of consultee comments is provided across all of the original ES chapter headings.

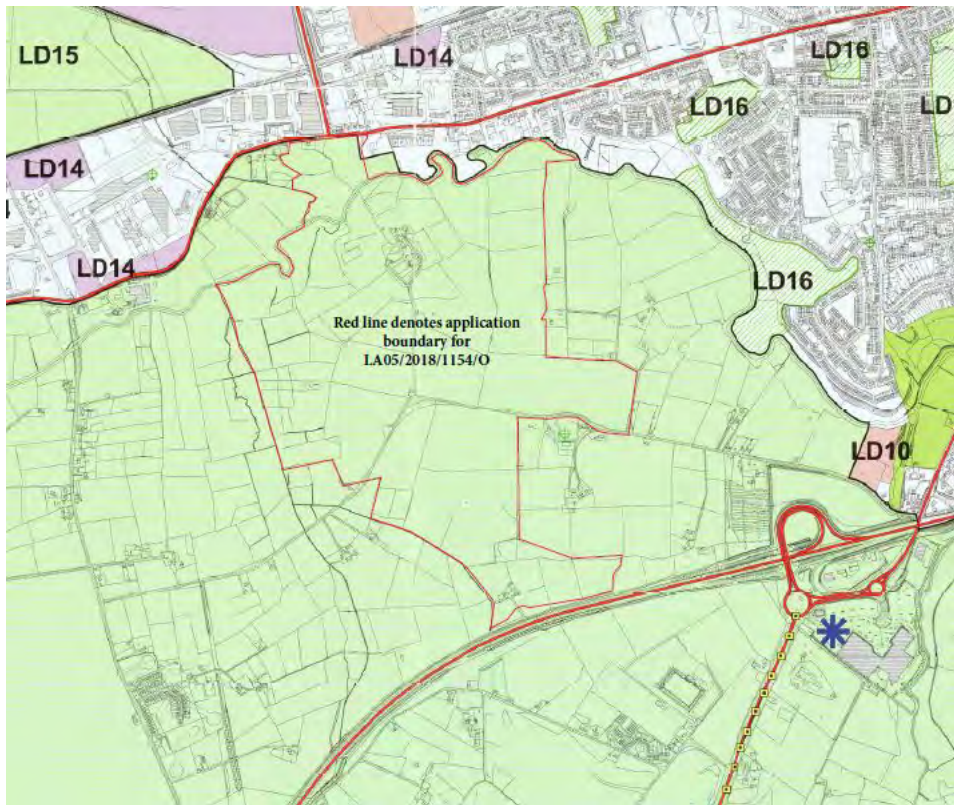
4.0 Maps

4.1 Below are a number of maps relevant to the applications.

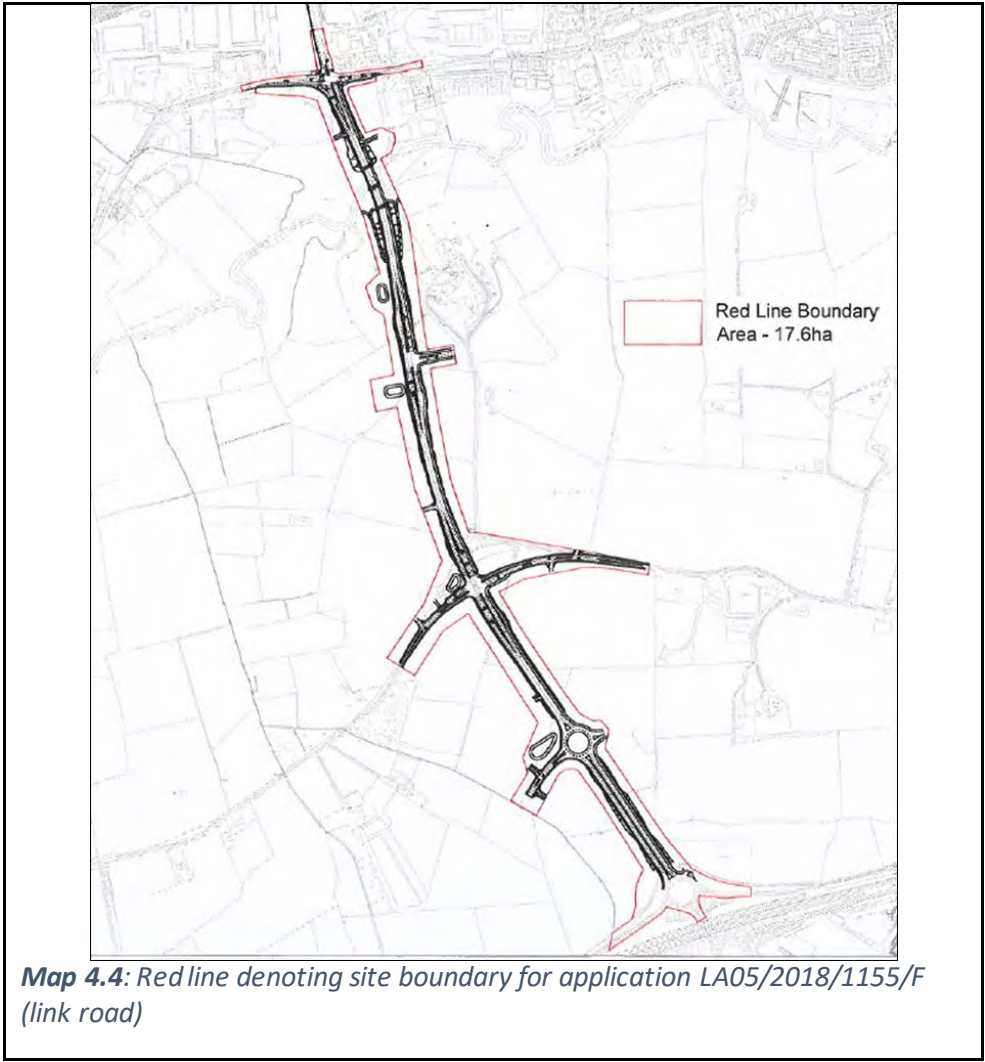




Map 4.2: Red line denoting site boundary for application LA05/2018/1154/O



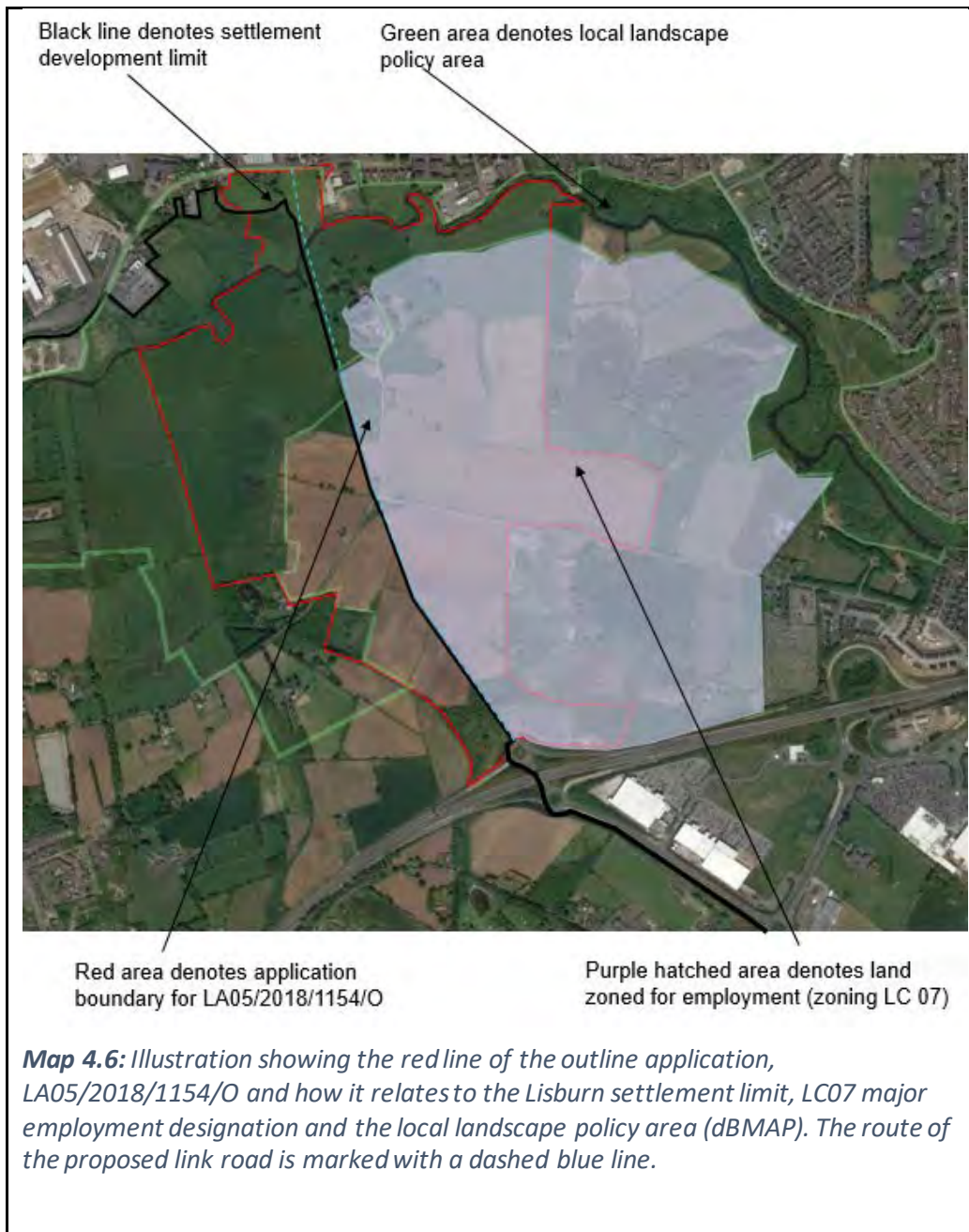
Map 4.3: Lisburn Area Plan 2001 – Application site (LA05/2018/1154/O) within the context of the LAP



Map 4.4: Red line denoting site boundary for application LA05/2018/1155/F (link road)



Map 4.5: Concept plan showing the proposed layout of the scheme which is for illustrative purposes. (It should be noted that any proposed development illustrated outside of the red line has not been approved or applied for & is not within the applicant's ownership)



5.0 Relevant planning history of site

- 5.1 The lands at Blaris were subject to a previous application for a major mixed use development and link road in 2006. Application S/2006/0443/O proposed a ‘major mixed use urban extension to include: business park, residential neighbourhood, retail, commercial and leisure uses, car showrooms, hotel and riverside restaurant and bar, primary school, community and social facilities, open space and landscaping, M1 Knockmore link road and ancillary infrastructure’. This application

was withdrawn in 2008. The Council's Development Management Officer's Report (DMOR) advised that the outline planning application process was abandoned in favour of a development framework for the land use zoning.

6.0 Development Plan context

6.1 Section 6(4) of The Planning Act (NI) 2011 states that in making any determination under the Act, 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 council has considered the relevant plan context for this location to be the:

- Lisburn Area Plan (LAP) 2001
- Draft Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan (dBMAP) 2015 and associated PAC Inquiry Report
- A new Local Development Plan for Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council Area is under preparation which will cover the period up to 2032.

6.3 The DMOR sets out that as draft BMAP 2015 had in its entirety not been lawfully adopted, the LAP 2001 is the statutory development plan for the area with dBMAP remaining a material consideration in addition to the dBMAP PAC Inquiry Report.

6.4 The LAP 2001 identifies the subject site as lying outside the Lisburn Settlement Limit and in the open countryside (Map 4.3). Draft BMAP extends the settlement limit and identifies a large part of the site as being outside the settlement limit. A large portion of the site also lies within a major employment zoning in dBMAP, LC07 (Map 4.6) and part of the site to the north falls within a Landscape Policy Area designation, LC21.

6.5 Within designation LC07, dBMAP lists the following uses which would be acceptable: light industrial uses, general industrial uses, storage or distribution uses, special industrial uses, business use (total floor space specified), hotel, educational use, healthcare facilities and car showrooms. It is noted in the DMOR that application

LA05/2018/1154/O would see approximately 65% of the application site apportioned to non-economic development uses.

- 6.6 The DMOR considers that the dBMAP Inquiry Report expresses the view that the Blaris site is a crucial zoning for new employment land and that such prime locations were rare in contrast to the wider range of available housing land. The Planning Appeals Commission (PAC) Report for dBMAP concluded that the strategic direction for housing growth refers to Lisburn City generally and not just West Lisburn. The view expressed in the Inquiry Report was that this area was far from ideal for housing purposes in view of its relatively isolated location from other housing and the fact that it is surrounded by major employment uses, retail development and roads infrastructure. The Inquiry Report concluded that no part of this zoning or any additional lands around the zoning should be allocated for housing.
- 6.7 The DMOR however indicates that dBMAP is still not adopted and questions whether an employment designation can be sustained at West Lisburn. LCCC accepts that the rationale behind the PAC's findings was valid at the time but considers that these findings are almost 10 years old and it also concludes that no employment use has come forward for the land. The DMOR states the importance of the Knockmore Link Road for unlocking the employment potential of land at West Lisburn and it describes the road scheme as one still regarded by the Department (DfI) as 'developer led'.
- 6.8 The full planning application (LA05/2018/1155/F) for the Knockmore Link Road submitted alongside the mixed use application, relates directly to the dBMAP designation LC17/01. The Knockmore to M1 link is classed as a 'Non-Strategic Road Scheme' by dBMAP. The dBMAP envisages that the link road would provide access to the major employment location at West Lisburn, identified in accordance with the Regional Development Strategy (RDS). The dBMAP informs that developers will be responsible for funding both schemes either in full or in a substantial part.

6.9 In terms of the emerging local development plan for LCCC, the Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council Local Development Plan 2032 (LCCC LDP) draft Plan Strategy was submitted to the Department for Infrastructure's Strategic Planning Division (Plan Oversight Team) who then wrote to the PAC on 6 July 2021 causing an Independent Examination to be carried out. A Commissioner has since been appointed to the Examination. The emerging LDP proposes to extend the settlement limit at Blaris from what is in the Lisburn Area Plan 2001, however, part of this planning application proposal would continue to fall outside the proposed settlement limit. The emerging draft Plan Strategy also proposes to include the designation of the Blaris employment site as a Strategic Mixed Use zoning (SMU01).

7.0 Regional Development Strategy (RDS) 2035

7.1 Blaris and West Lisburn are addressed specifically in the RDS at Spatial Framework Guidance 1 (SFG1) which states that key locations should be identified and protected for economic growth. West Lisburn/Blaris has been identified under SFG1 as a major employment location, supporting the drive to provide a range of opportunities for job creation. The RDS recognises the benefits of Lisburn from its location at the meeting point of the Belfast / Dublin economic corridor and the East / West transport corridor.

7.2 The DMOR makes reference to regional guidance RG1, RG2, RG4 and RG7 of the RDS. RG1 highlights the need to protect zoned land, and states that land zoned for economic development use in development plans should be protected as it provides a valuable resource for local and external investment, thereby contributing to the aims of the Programme for Government. Protection of such zonings should ensure that a variety of suitable sites exist across Northern Ireland to facilitate economic growth.

7.3 The DMOR acknowledges the identification of the lands as a key employment location (SFG 1) but justifies the departure from this by virtue of no employment uses having come forward for the site. Comment is also included to the effect that the infrastructure necessary to unlock the potential of the land is not supported in a

Plan and the Knockmore Link Road is still regarded by the Department as a developer led road scheme. The DMOR refers to an 'obvious tension' between the ambition for West Lisburn as set out in the RDS and the direction offered in the draft Plan as to how this ambition might be realised.

7.4 The DMOR points to the proposed link road as a significant material consideration in realising the full potential of West Lisburn as a strategic location for employment. In acknowledging the potential provision of the Knockmore Link Road, the DMOR states that 'it is equally important not to undermine further the RDS policy direction in respect of West Lisburn'.

7.5 The DMOR sets out in paragraph 2 that the proposal is contrary to both the extant and emerging plans. Paragraph 151 of the DMOR explains that the proposal is '*not consistent with the regional strategic direction offered in the RDS...*'

8.0 Strategic Planning Policy Statement for Northern Ireland (SPPS)

8.1 The council has considered the SPPS alongside the relevant Planning Policy Statements:

- Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 2 - Natural Heritage
- Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 3 - Access, Movement and Parking
- Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 4 – Planning Economic Development
- Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 7 - Quality Residential Environments
- Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 8 - Open Space, Sport and Outdoor Recreation
- Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 12 - Housing in Settlements
- Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 15 – Planning and Flood Risk
- Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 16 – Tourism
- Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 21- Sustainable Development in the Countryside

8.2 The DMOR also lists the following documents that LCCC considered relevant to the assessment of the applications:

- Creating Places: Achieving quality in residential environments
- Planning Advice Note on the Implementation of Planning Policy for the Retention of Zoned Land and Economic Development Uses
- West Lisburn Development Framework (WLDF)

8.3 The DMOR sets out consideration of paragraph 6.280 of the SPPS and the requirement for a sequential test for applications with town centre uses that are not in an existing centre and not in accordance with an up to date LDP (town centre first approach). The DMOR sets out that, other than housing, the uses proposed (community facilities, retail, leisure and business offers) are consistent with the key site requirements stipulated in the LDP and as such, the need for a sequential test is not considered to be necessary.

8.4 Paragraph 6.89 of the SPPS, which states that it is important that economic development land and buildings which are well located and suited to such purposes are retained so as to ensure a sufficient ongoing supply, is mentioned in the DMOR but it is not clear how it was considered. Paragraph 6.89 also informs that planning permission should not normally be granted for proposals that would result in the loss of land zoned for economic development use and that any decision to reallocate such zoned land to other uses ought to be made through the LDP process.

8.5 The DMOR also considers Policy CTY 1 of PPS 21 with regards to the portion of the development in the open countryside. It is acknowledged in the DMOR that approximately 200 residential units and 100,000 square feet of commercial employment floor space is proposed outside of the settlement limit. The DMOR explains that the applicant has suggested the Lagan floodplain to be a more logical edge to the settlement. The DMOR does not consider this as sufficient justification in its own right. The rationale provided in allowing the portion of development in the open countryside is that 'the need to develop all the land comprehensively is addressed as part of the assessment of the policy and other material considerations and the siting of new buildings in the open countryside is considered in the planning balance.' The DMOR also contends that this development should not be considered

to create precedent for development in the open countryside in general as this is considered to be a strategic location and the general ambition to secure the orderly and proper development is not directly transferable to other sites.

- 8.6 The DMOR also makes reference to the Planning Advice Note on the Implementation of Planning Policy for the Retention of Zoned Land and Economic Development Uses. The PAN advises that Planning Policy Statement 4 (PPS 4) 'Planning and Economic Development': Policy PED 7 'Retention of Zoned Land and Economic Development Uses' is of particular relevance when considering planning applications on land zoned for economic development use in a local development plan. The advice note also informs that it is necessary to retain existing sites for economic development and safeguard the supply of future economic development land and that only in exceptional circumstances will the loss of land zoned for economic development use in a local development plan to other uses be considered. Planning permission should therefore not normally be granted for proposals that would result in the loss of such land and buildings to other uses. In terms of LDPs, the PAN informs that where a decision by a council to reallocate land zoned for economic development use to another use is considered necessary, this should be carried out through the development plan process. Council must consider why the site is no longer required or considered suitable for continued economic development use.
- 8.7 Policy PED 7 also states that development that would result in the loss of land or buildings zoned for economic development uses in a development plan (either existing areas or new allocations) to other uses will not be permitted, unless zoned land has been substantially developed for alternative uses. The DMOR notes that application site remains undeveloped at the time of writing. The DMOR has acknowledged that the application, insofar as it comprises a residential element, is contrary to the general policy thrust set out in the SPPS and Policy PED 7 of PPS 4 in that it will result in the loss of land zoned for economic development uses.
- 8.8 The DMOR details that the application proposes a mixed use development and that approximately 65% of the application site would be for non-economic development

uses. The application site accounts for approximately 50% of the employment zoning area. LCCC considers that in the absence of continued interest in the land, significant material weight is given to the updated evidence which describes the economic benefits that might be accrued from bringing forward mixed use development on the land. LCCC link this consideration to the delivery of the Knockmore Link Road and the context of no jobs having been created in the previous ten years.

Housing need consideration

8.9 The DMOR refers to housing need and makes reference to strategic policy in the RDS, paragraph 6.133 of the SPPS and PPS 12, Housing in Settlements. Comments regarding housing need were provided by the Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE) in its consultation reply to LCCC and the council's consideration of housing need appears to be based around this consultation reply. The NIHE reply makes reference to a projected requirement for social housing of 1457 new units over a five year period (2020-2025). It is noted from the DMOR that this proposal includes a provision for 10% affordable housing.

9.0 Representations

9.1 LCCC received two letters of objection to each application and one letter of support in relation to the full application for the link road. It should be noted that an objection relating to both applications, but only logged against the full application, was subsequently withdrawn. It should also be noted that the withdrawal correspondence which applies to both applications, has been logged on Public Access as supporting the application instead of 'neutral' or 'miscellaneous'.

9.2 The following concerns were raised in correspondence objecting to the applications:

- Potential noise pollution
- Potential air pollution
- The proposed design of the scheme is not good, houses have little amenity space
- Potential for increased flooding from more hard surfacing

- Safety issue in the parkland area from flooding there (flood plain)
- Environmental impact as well as impact on wildlife / ecology
- Potential issue with overlooking
- Impact on property value- employment buildings close to boundary of adjacent properties
- Increased traffic impacting on road network and travel time
- Negative impact on the character of the area
- Mention of possibility of judicially reviewing the proposal

9.3 The letter of support submitted to the link road application stated that, “anything that takes pressure off the roads in the centre of the town is a plus.” The DMOR advises that the concerns raised in representations have been addressed within the relevant policy sections throughout the report.

10.0 Consultation responses

10.1 LCCC carried out consultations with NI Water, DfI Roads, DAERA (NIEA), DfI Rivers Planning Advisory and Modelling Unit, NIHE, DfC Historic Environment Division (HED), LCCCs Environmental Health Department and Shared Environmental Service (SES). No significant objections were received.

10.2 DfI Roads is a statutory consultee in this process and has provided responses to the council accordingly in its consultee capacity. It stated in its last response to the council ‘the Department is content that the developer has adequately addressed the traffic impacts of their proposed development’ and has recommended conditions that could be added if the application were to be approved. RPD officials met with DfI Roads officials to inform them that the notifications were under consideration and to ascertain if there may be any implications for the Road’s programme of work if it was decided that the applications would be called in. DfI Roads confirmed that they were not aware of any programmed divisional projects that would be impacted by such a decision.

- 10.3 Northern Ireland Water (NIW) has indicated in its final response to the council that the Water Network Capacity Check has been completed and has identified a solution for this proposal. NIW also indicated that, in relation to the foul network capacity check, the scheme is predicted to cause flooding detriment at a manhole downstream and surcharge detriment at 45 other manholes and, due to the predicted detriment, option development is required in the next stage of this study. Depending on the options taken forward, flooding, surcharge and spill treatment should be reassessed. NIW recognised that this will take some considerable time and would not be completed before the outline application had been determined. They have in this instance therefore provided a condition to be attached to any planning approval that requires the submission of details of the drainage proposals for the disposal and treatment of foul sewage to be agreed at Reserved Matters stage. NIW also confirmed, when questioned at the Planning Committee meeting, that it was not aware of the nature of the final solutions at this stage.
- 10.4 LCCC also carried out in-house consultation with their Economic Development Unit (EDU). LCCC EDU challenged the applicants' methodology against which gross value added (GVA) is calculated and commented that the economic benefits are likely to be over-estimated. Therefore, the weight to be afforded to the monetary contribution that this proposal makes to the local economy is treated with caution and not attached significant weight by LCCC. In general terms the EDU did advise that the proposal is a 'once-in-a-lifetime opportunity' for the council area and surrounding region. They also commented that there is no doubt that the construction of the Knockmore Link Road is key to unlocking the economic development potential of West Lisburn (Blaris) and overall accept given the history of market failure in delivering the link road at the site, this proposal is welcomed on balance.
- 10.5 NIHE in its consultation reply, requested that social housing be delivered in the early phases to meet a current identified need. NIHE would wish to see up to 20% of any residential development on this site committed to the provision of affordable housing i.e. a combination of social rented housing and intermediate housing. The

DMOR points out that the NIHE notes in error that the developer has already indicated a willingness to offer 10% social units (130 units). The DMOR clarifies that the offer from the developer is 10% affordable housing (assuming 1300 residential units are delivered) and adds that the current definition of affordable housing provides for both social and intermediate need. It is not clear whether this has been clarified with the NIHE but the DMOR suggests that the applicant or developer discuss the housing mix, layout, finance and delivery timing of the social housing units in consultation with a Registered Housing Association.

- 10.6 DfI Rivers provided substantial responses relating to the Flood Risk Assessment and PPS 15 policies. DfI Rivers offered to assist with condition wording and requested that informatives be attached to any approval.
- 10.7 NI Water, DfI Roads, DAERA (NIEA), DfI Rivers Planning Advisory and Modelling Unit, DfC Historic Environment Division (HED), Environmental Health and Shared Environmental Service (SES) were also consulted on the link road application. No significant concerns were recorded, however, DfI Roads, Environmental Health, DAERA, SES and DfC HED all provided conditions to be attached to any approval and DfI Rivers provided informatives.

11.0 Pre-determination Meeting and Planning Committee Meeting

- 11.1 A pre-determination hearing / special meeting of the Planning Committee took place on 22 March 2021. At the Special Meeting, the Case Officer outlined the planning policy context and material considerations relevant to the application, after which the Agent (Mr. Shanks) spoke in support of the application and to answer members' queries.
- 11.2 The following issues were raised by members:
- Alderman Tinsley queried what the general mix of uses was aside from housing; how the flood plain area would be left and whether there would be any social housing included in the 10% affordable housing allocation. Mr. Shanks explained the mix of uses and explained that the flood plain area would become a riverside park. Mr.

Shanks explained that the 10% social housing would be as defined by the NIHE and housing associations.

- Alderman Dillon queried the timeframe for the road and houses to be completed and whether charging tolls would be used for the road. Mr. Shanks outlined that the intention was to complete the road and then phase in the residential and other applications. He stated that at this time there was no intention to have a toll for the road.
- Cllr Mackin queried whether or not the riverside park would be usable and how would this work and sought clarification on how the bus service would operate and referred to a wedge of land to the east asking why a concept plan for this area could not be seen. Mr. Shanks explained that much of the park would remain in a natural state with a tow path and connected walkways. He explained the improved connectivity that would result from the proposals (assumed reference to bus service) which would link to the whole city including Maze Long Kesh in the future. Financial contributions to public transport provision would be phased. The design will allow Translink to expand their service. In relation to the wedge of land, Mr Shanks explained that the concept Master plan would future proof the area to allow for future development.
- Cllr Gregg requested the NIHE response should be included within any subsequent report. Cllr Gregg also queried whether or not the application was in line with the local development plan and sought more details on comments from NI Water as he considered some statements contradictory. Mr Shanks provided the breakdown of the land use. He then advised that he did not have the definition of affordable housing but confirmed that the definitions of co-ownership and housing associations would be used.
- Cllr Swan asked what was meant by affordable housing and Mr. Shanks responded that the precise detail would not be included at this stage; that level of detail would be for future consideration.
- Cllr J Craig referred to the capacity of NI Water infrastructure and asked what issues the development may cause. Roy Mooney from NI Water advised that checks were

being carried out but it was likely that improvements would be required. The NI Water confirmed that there is currently no idea of the size and scale of any solution.

- Cllr Palmer pointed out that a landing strip and military camp is not referred to in the archaeological report. Tom Kerr from HED advised that the military camp was not registered with the relevant body and that it would be referred to when the applications come before the committee.
- In reply to questions from Cllr Gregg, the Head of Planning explained in relation to affordable housing that as the development would take place over a long period of time then the affordable housing split (social/co-ownership) would depend on the needs at the time.
- Cllr Palmer asked what proportion of the development was outside the development limit. The Head of Planning outlined that the majority of the development sits inside the new development limit. Part of the application is outside the development limit and members will be asked to consider this when making their decision.
- Alderman Grehan sought clarification on comments made by the representative from DfI Rivers. The Head of Planning explained that more detail would be provided when the full applications were made.

11.3 At the Planning Committee meeting of 12 April, both recommendations for approval were agreed. At this meeting the Council's Principal Planning Officer presented both applications together.

- Councillor Honeyford spoke in opposition to LA05/2018/1154/O and cited the following reasons: he was excited to see the road being progressed but disappointed at the content of the mixed use application; the area zoned for Economic use had been drastically reduced in the application; the balance had, in his opinion, been pushed out of sync; the application is without healthcare and the industrial use has been reduced and he felt that the balance was too far in favour of the developer's preference. Cllr Honeyford emphasised the prime location of the site and expressed dismay that it would be used for housing. A number of Councillors questioned Cllr Honeyford's concerns.

- Sir Jeffrey Donaldson MP spoke in support of the application. He made reference to the link road being one of the most important pieces of infrastructure which the Lisburn area will have developed for quite a number of years. A number of Cllrs queried whether Mr Donaldson was concerned about the reduction in the economic benefit potential. Sir Jeffrey said that he was not and stated that the bigger picture needed to be taken on board. Discussion took place around the social / affordable housing allocation.
- The agent and technical consultants spoke in support of the application and responded to members' queries. They made the following main points: The applications are vital to unlocking the potential of the city and the area; the proposal will open up the Maze Long Kesh site and provide connectivity around the city; the developer is investing £12m in the road; jobs have not been created in recent years showing that the current mix is wrong. A question and answer session with the planning officers took place. Alderman Grehan asked whether the social housing percentage could be increased. Mr. Shanks explained that there was no planning policy regarding the inclusion of affordable housing and that 10% had been included voluntarily.
- Councillor M Gregg referred to paras 68 and 69 (relating to the DfI Directions) of the report and sought clarification. The Head of Planning stated that DfI had requested that no decision issue until they had an opportunity to consider whether the applications should be called in after the Council had made its decision.
- Cllr Gregg said that he agreed with previous comments, however, he still had concerns at the amount of industrial land being handed over to housing. He went on to outline some discrepancies he had noticed stating that the future potential the road may unlock was not for consideration today. He felt there was not enough weight for him in the argument to justify the amount of industrial land being used for housing and he could not support the recommendation. Cllr Gregg said that the Committee was here to provide sustainable development and that sacrificing the

employment land was too high a price. He would have supported a higher mix of employment land versus housing.

- Alderman Tinsley asked about how the riverside park would be managed. Mr Shanks confirmed that this would be considered under the Section 76 agreement.
- Alderman Grehan proposed deferring the application to allow discussions with the applicant in an effort to increase the amount of affordable housing to 15%. However, taking all of the comments on board she was reluctant to delay the application.
- The committee agreed to approve the outline application with a majority of 8:1 and the full application with a majority of 9:0.

12.0 LCCC Statement of Reasons

12.1 The notification from the council to the Department was accompanied by a 'Statement of Reasons', as requested by the 2019 Notification Direction where the application would significantly prejudice the implementation of the local development plan's objectives and policies, which outlined the Council's reasoning for its decision (**See Appendix 2**).

12.2 LCCC indicates in the 'Statement of Reasons' that the application only meets this criteria insofar as the Department had issued a direction. The statement goes on to state that had no direction been received then LCCC would have concluded the application process having regard to the Planning (Notification of Applications) Direction 2017 but without the need to consult the Department. This statement is somewhat contradictory from the opening paragraphs of its notification letter and the DMOR also states that the decision is finely balanced and is contrary to the extant and emerging local development plans. The 'Statement of Reasons' advises that LCCC does not consider the proposal to be an exceptional case and does not consider that it adversely impacts any significant regional policy objective. Rather it states that it creates opportunity to unlock land designated to be of regional importance at the Maze.

12.3 The Statement of Reasons sets out why LCCC does not consider the proposal to significantly prejudice the local development plan's policies and objectives which again is contradictory to paragraph 12.1 above. Thirty five reasons are provided for the outline application and nine reasons for the full application. These appear to have been largely taken from the DMOR.

12.4 It is not necessary to rehearse all of the reasons provided by LCCC as they can be found at **Appendix 2**. Some of the reasons for the outline application are summarised as follows:

- BMAP is still not adopted and LCCC question whether an employment zone can be sustained at West Lisburn, whilst the findings of the (Public Inquiry) report are accepted as valid at the time, this was almost ten years ago and the potential of the land has not been realised.
- LCCC point to a tension between the ambition for West Lisburn in the RDS and the direction offered in the draft plan as to how this ambition might be realised. The infrastructure necessary to realise the potential of the land is not supported in a plan and the Knockmore Link road is regarded by the Department as a 'developer led' road scheme.
- LCCC consider that the employment designation LC07 has brought about no jobs to date and in the absence of an employment interest in the land they give significant material weight to the updated evidence which describes the economic benefits that might be accrued from a mixed use development linked to the delivery of the Knockmore Link road. 50% of the employment zoning will remain available.
- It is considered that the balance of the land could still be developed for employment with suitable mitigation in the form of a buffer which provides clear

segregation between the neighbouring uses. The DMOR points to a challenge and consideration for LCCC; whether the loss of this amount of (employment) land will assist in realising the full employment potential of the balance of the land by putting in place the necessary road infrastructure (relates to the remaining 50% of the zoning).

- LCCC references the West Lisburn Development Framework 2015-2035 (Publication date April 2015), a non-statutory document carried out on behalf of the Council and an economic analysis carried out by Oxford Economics which informed the framework. The analysis concluded that the mixed use development of this land could generate 3,500 employment-class jobs. The analysis also forecast that the additional spending by new residents will generate 1,300 jobs across the Council area together with a further 1,600 indirect and induced jobs. The ability to secure the level of employment suggested in the Oxford Economics analysis is predicated on at least 50% of the Blaris lands (as identified in draft BMAP) being available for employment use. The DMOR points to the potential job provision as a factor in reducing any argument regarding the need for all of the site to be zoned for employment purposes.
- LCCC has indicated the planning applicant has assembled the necessary land to construct the Knockmore Link Road and provided a phasing plan that indicates the road will be constructed in parallel with some of the mixed use development as a first phase of development. LCCC considered this a significant material consideration in realising the full potential of West Lisburn as a strategic location for employment, a matter of equal importance in order not to undermine further the RDS policy direction in respect of West Lisburn.
- LCCC considers that the development of West Lisburn (Blaris) and the wider land is a 'once-in-a-lifetime opportunity' for the council area and surrounding region.

- The proximity of the site to known areas of deprivation within the council area and to North and West Belfast (two areas of high unemployment), and the enhanced connectivity proposed by the Knockmore M1 Link Road to the motorway network and the Knockmore Rail Halt to the railway network, means that the employment generated at West Lisburn (Blaris) has the potential to provide positive economic impact not just in Lisburn and Castlereagh, but in the wider region and beyond.
- The construction of the Knockmore Link Road is key to unlocking the economic development potential of West Lisburn (Blaris). The road gives the Knockmore Hill, Lissue and Ballinderry Road Industrial Estates direct access to the strategic road network. The significance of the proposal in terms of unlocking the potential of the strategic land reserve at the Maze Long Kesh is also recognised by LCCC.
- The Knockmore Link Road and orbital bus services will provide increased accessibility to employment opportunity to socially disadvantaged communities within Lisburn City and beyond. A £500,000 (developer) contribution to Translink to realise the orbital bus service is weighed as significant.
- The proposed affordable housing provision at 10% will assist in meeting a continued and pressing need in Lisburn City.

12.5 Below is summary of the reasons provided for why LCCC does not consider the link road application to significantly prejudice the local development plan's policies and objectives. Again, the full reasons provided can be found in the Council's Statement of Reasons at **Appendix 2**.

- Significant material weight is afforded by LCCC to the draft BMAP and PAC Inquiry Report which identified the proposed road as a developer led road scheme (proposal LC17).

- LCCC consider that the proposed development has been designed to support sustainable modes of transport and public transport facilities. It allows for further improvement to the Sprucefield Park and Ride facility, access from the motorway to the proposed Knockmore Rail Halt and the use of public transport will be promoted through Translink incentives to operate local bus connections into Lisburn City that will significantly improve traffic progression through Lisburn City Centre, provide a direct link to the strategic road network for the west of Lisburn and in doing so, create the opportunity for orbital bus services to connect to the existing radial services.
- The strategic economic benefits of the proposed link road have been allocated significant weight in the assessment of this application by LCCC. The road would give the Knockmore Hill, Lissue and Ballinderry Road Industrial Estates direct access to the strategic road network. It would also facilitate the development of West Lisburn (Blaris) as a place for major economic growth. The road is designed to allow future access to the Maze Long Kesh strategic land reserve and the major untapped tourism asset based around the assets cared for by the Ulster Aviation Society.

13.0 Third party representation to DfI recommending consideration of 'call in'.

- 13.1 The Department received correspondence from Aidan Thatcher, Director of Planning and Building Control, on behalf of Belfast City Council, on 2nd April 2021 citing concerns that the proposal appears to deviate significantly from the local development plan both in terms of the incumbent plan, the Lisburn Area Plan 2001 and dBMAP 2015, the scale and form of the proposal is such that it is likely to provide a level of housing and traffic generation that is considered both unjustifiable and unnecessary and may remove the potential for delivery of more appropriate development which would be in accordance with regional planning policy. Belfast City Council also expressed concerns regarding the designation of the strategic mixed use site at West Lisburn/Blaris for housing and employment and questioned the need for housing at the location. BCC have further commented that the policy

direction for Blaris/West Lisburn appears to stem from the WLDF which is a non-statutory document.

14.0 Assessment

14.1 In terms of the legislative and policy context, Section 29(1) of the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 (the 2011 Act) states as follows:-

“29 - Call in of applications, etc., to Department

(1) The Department may give directions requiring applications for planning permission made to a council, or applications for the approval of a council of any matter required under a development order, to be referred to it instead of being dealt with by councils.

14.2 Paragraphs 5.59 and 5.60 of the Strategic Planning Policy Statement (SPPS) provide as follows:

“Call-in

5.59 The Department has powers to direct that certain applications be referred to it rather than being dealt with by councils. This provides a necessary safeguard where there are applications that raise issues of such importance that their impact is considered to extend to a sub-regional or regional level. It is anticipated that these powers would only be used in exceptional circumstances as it is recognised that councils are best placed to deal with the vast majority of applications within their own council areas.

5.60 In addition to the general power to call-in a planning application, councils are required to notify the Department in instances where they propose to grant planning permission for certain types of development as set out in a direction. These could include, for example, a major development application which would significantly prejudice the

implementation of the LDP objectives and policies or where councils have an interest in the land.”

14.3 Development Management Practice Note 13 ‘Notification and Call-In’ also provides good practice guidance on the ‘call in’ procedures. Paragraph 3.1 emphasises that *“In practice applications will be called in by exception, ...”*. Paragraph 3.2 continues:

“3.2 There may be circumstances where the proposed development raises issues of such importance that they could be considered to have a significant regional impact, regardless of falling below the threshold for regionally significant development, or it may be considered the Department is a more appropriate authority to determine the application.”

14.4 The council’s Development Management Officer’s Report (DMOR) sets out an assessment of the proposal against the relevant plans and planning policies and includes a consideration of the representations received. Most consultation responses have recommended certain conditions and informatives are attached to any future planning approval.

14.5 The ‘statement of reasons’ by the council has been fully considered as part of this assessment. Overall the council has acknowledged that the application, insofar as it comprises a residential element, is not consistent with the regional strategic direction offered in the RDS and is contrary to the general policy thrust set out in the SPPS and Policy PED 7 of PPS 4, in that it will result in the loss of land zoned for economic development uses. The council has mentioned the passage of time since the RDS was published and no employment uses having come forward. It has also placed weight on the West Lisburn Development Framework, a non-statutory document commissioned by the council, as updated evidence to support the approval of the applications. The strategic economic benefits of the proposed link road have been allocated significant weight in the assessment of this application by LCCC and a justification for the council’s departure from the local development plan,

dBMAP and associated PAC Inquiry Report. The council has indicated that the link road is still regarded by the Department as 'developer led' and the developer is proposing to invest £12m in order to deliver the road. The council's willingness to secure the 'developer led' Knockmore Link Road has been evident throughout the report and there are references to this being a 'once in a lifetime opportunity.'

Potential regional/sub-regional impacts and exceptional circumstances which warrant further scrutiny by the Department

- 14.6 In assessing the notifications, and in keeping with paragraph 5.59 of the SPPS, the key questions which officials have asked are as follows: - **Are these applications that raise issues of such importance that their impact is considered to extend to a sub-regional or regional level and are the circumstances of this case exceptional such as to render use of the power to call in appropriate?**
- 14.7 After careful consideration of the notified applications, and the detailed assessment provided by the council, it is considered that the outline application, LA05/2018/1154/O, raises several issues of such importance that their impact is considered to extend to a sub-regional or regional level and the circumstances of this case are considered exceptional to warrant further scrutiny by the Department through the use of its call in powers under section 29 of the 2011 Act.
- 14.8 The areas where further scrutiny is recommended relate predominantly to the potential regional/sub regional impacts of this proposal on the implementation of the plan-led system and also on the consistent application of regional planning policy and have been set out below:

Potential regional/sub regional impacts on existing and emerging LDP and plan-led system

- 14.9 Since 2015, Northern Ireland has been operating a plan-led system, similar to other jurisdictions, which gives primacy to the local development plan. *Section 6(4) of The*

Planning Act (NI) 2011 states that in making any determination under the Act, 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. This, therefore, establishes a plan-led system by giving the local development plan primacy in the context of making a planning determination under the 2011 Act. This includes the determination of a planning application, in that regard has to be had to the plan and the determination must be made in accordance with it unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

14.10 In this instance, the council have resolved to approve a major proposal (mixed use development to include new housing (1300 dwellings) and commercial floor space (754,000 square feet) 1.6km M1-Knockmore Link Road, riverside parkland and ancillary works) which is contrary to the extant local development plan as the subject lands are outside of the settlement limit shown in the Lisburn Area Plan 2001 and are also largely outside of the settlement limit proposed by dBMAP. The council's resolution to approve the applications is also contrary to the PAC Report, that followed the dBMAP Inquiry, which strongly advised against the use of the subject lands for housing and added that this area was far from ideal for housing purposes in view of its relatively isolated location from other housing and the fact that it is surrounded by major employment uses, retail development and roads infrastructure. The Inquiry Report concluded that no part of this zoning or any additional lands around the zoning should be allocated for housing. It is considered that the potential impacts of the proposal on the existing local development plan and the potential for this proposal to constitute a major development application which could significantly prejudice the implementation of the local development plan's objectives and policies requires further scrutiny by the Department.

14.11 Furthermore, you will be aware that the Council is also bringing forward its new Local Development Plan and has been engaging with DfI's Strategic Planning Division (Plan Oversight Team) at key stages of the process. The Department has recently requested that the PAC cause the Independent Examination into the council's draft Plan Strategy and the PAC has recently appointed a Commissioner to this

Examination. Part of this site has been identified in the emerging plan within a proposed designation and any proposals for this area will be tested for soundness at the Independent Examination. The case officer's report has indicated that 'the decision is finely balanced and whilst contrary to the extant and emerging LDP a number of material considerations are weighed in the decisions making process'. Nevertheless, RPD officials consider, particularly given the scale and strategic significance of this proposal, that further scrutiny is required due to the potential for this planning decision to be premature by potentially prejudicing the outcome of the emerging plan process. In addition, if this issue of potential prematurity is not fully explored it could have possible regional implications on the implementation of the plan-led system and it is therefore considered that this requires further scrutiny by the Department.

Potential regional/sub regional impacts on implementation of RDS

- 14.12 The outline application proposes that around 65% of the site will be for non-economic development which conflicts with the RDS designation whereby West Lisburn/Blaris is addressed specifically at SFG1 as key locations that should be identified and protected for economic growth. RG1 of the RDS highlights the need to protect zoned land, and states that land zoned for economic development use in development plans should be protected as it provides a valuable resource for local and external investment. The potential implications of this for the implementation of the Regional Development Strategy 2035 is therefore considered to require further scrutiny by the Department.

Potential regional/sub-regional impacts on implementation of planning policy

- 14.13 Paragraph 6.89 of the SPPS states that planning permission should not normally be granted for proposals that would result in the loss of land zoned for economic development use and that any decision to reallocate such zoned land to other uses ought to be made through the LDP process. It is considered that the applications raise issues relating to the implementation of planning policy which could have potential regional/sub-regional implications if they are not fully explored. This refers

particularly to the SPPS (para 6.61-6.78 (Development in the Countryside), para 6.79-6.98 (Economic Development, Industry and Commerce) as well as PPS4 (Planning and Economic Development) and PPS21 (Sustainable Development in the Countryside). The potential implications for the implementation of regional planning policy are therefore considered to require further scrutiny by the Department.

Lack of robust evidential basis relating to housing need

- 14.14 It is considered that there is a gap in the council's assessment relating to housing need, in particular, there appears to be a lack of an evidential base or robust justification as to why this need cannot be currently met elsewhere within the plan area and why there is a need to release further land beyond the settlement limit for development. This is an area that would therefore benefit from further scrutiny.

Summary

- 14.15 Overall, in relation to the areas identified in the assessment above, if the Department accepts the way in which the LDP, RDS, dBMAP have been set aside without further assessment it could result in the potential setting of a precedent which could compromise the integrity of the plan-led system, and could potentially weaken the application of regional planning policy in the future. It is therefore recommended that the applications require further scrutiny by the Department to ensure all matters are fully explored before a decision is taken.
- 14.16 Further to the questions, therefore, set out in paragraph 14.6, and in keeping with paragraph 5.59 of the SPPS, it is considered that the outline application, LA05/2018/1154/O, raises issues of such importance that their impact is considered to extend to a sub-regional or regional level and the circumstances of this case are exceptional such as to render it appropriate to use the power to call in, under Section 29 of the Planning Act 2011, for the reasons summarised above. The outline application, in particular, has the potential to have regional/sub regional implications for the implementation of the RDS, the local development plan for the area (Lisburn

Area Plan 2001), dBMAP and also regional planning policy contained within the Strategic Planning Policy Statement and Planning Policy Statements if all matters are not fully considered. Fundamentally, the development has the potential to impact on the current development plan process with regards to the existing and emerging LDP for LCCC which could potentially impact on the effective implementation of the planned system and this, therefore, requires further scrutiny. It is also recommended that it would be important for the associated full application (LA05/2018/1155/F), relating to the Knockmore Link Road proposal, to be 'called in' so that there is a consistent and comprehensive approach and in order that the applications can be processed in parallel.

- 14.17 If the applications are called in, the Department may face criticism from the council and developer because of perceived delays in the planning process, for a proposal which they consider could result in economic benefits for the area due to the proposed construction of the 'developer led' link road. They may also consider that any delay could jeopardise the development of the 'developer led' link road. The applicant has indicated to the Chief Planner in a recent email (23 November 2021) they have secured funding for the road link and intend to go to tender early 2022.
- 14.18 It is important to note that, should the applications be called in, the Department will proceed to process them with an open mind and this may (or may not) ultimately result in a grant of planning permission. The decision to 'call in' is entirely without prejudice to the Department's ultimate decision on the actual applications.
- 14.19 With respect to the question of Executive Referral under the Ministerial Code read in conjunction with section 28A of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 ("NIA"), having received counsel advice, it is considered that a 'call in' decision is not cross-cutting, significant or controversial as it does not determine the actual application but rather is simply a step in the planning process and, therefore, does not require referral to the Executive.

14.20 It is recommended that a proposed 'call in' reason on the associated Direction(s) should read as follows:-

'The Department has given this Direction in view of the proposed development's potential conflict with the Regional Development Strategy 2035, the local development plan for the area (Lisburn Area Plan 2001) the draft Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan, regional planning policy contained within the Strategic Planning Policy Statement and Planning Policy Statements and the potential for the proposed development to impact on the implementation of the plan-led system. It is therefore considered to be an exceptional case and that the regional and sub-regional issues raised would benefit from further scrutiny by the Department.'

15.0 Recommendation

15.1 It is recommended that the Department direct, under section 29 of the 2011 Act, that the applications are referred to it for determination. A submission should therefore be forwarded to the Minister with this recommendation as soon as possible.

Recommended by:	Niall Marshall	Date: 26/11/2021
Agreed by:	Aileen Nelson	Date: 26/11/2021
	Scott Symington	Date: 30/11/2021
	Angus Kerr	Date: 30/11/2021

From: Dfl Ministerial Casework
Sent: 29 December 2021 09:38
To: Dfl Private Office
Subject: FW: Routine SUB-1012-2021 Recommending 'Call In' of Blaris Planning Applications- Routine

Please see below from the Minister.
Many thanks,

From: Dfl Ministerial Casework
Sent: 24 December 2021 16:10
To: Dfl Ministerial Casework
Subject: RE: Routine SUB-1012-2021 Recommending 'Call In' of Blaris Planning Applications- Routine

Agree with recommendation to call in.

-----Original Message-----

From: Dfl Private Office

Sent: 29 December 2021 10:17

To: Kerr, Angus <Angus.Kerr@infrastructure-ni.gov.uk>

Cc: Symington, Scott

; Godfrey, Katrina (Dfl – Perm Sec)

Sandra

McGrady, Fiona

Beggs, Alistair

Monaghan, Kevin

Maroadi, Julie

; Nelson, Aileen

; Thompson, Julie

; Orr, Gillian

McCartan, Fiona

Hinds,

Dfl Press Office

Subject: Submission Decision SUB-1012-2021 : RECOMMENDATION TO MINISTER TO 'CALL IN' PLANNING APPLICATIONS LA05/2018/1154/O AND LA05/2018/1155/F (BLARIS) FROM LISBURN AND CASTLEREAGH CITY COUNCIL

Classification: Official

Timing: Routine

Reference: SUB-1012-2021

Subject: SUB-1012-2021 : RECOMMENDATION TO MINISTER TO 'CALL IN' PLANNING APPLICATIONS LA05/2018/1154/O AND LA05/2018/1155/F (BLARIS) FROM LISBURN AND CASTLEREAGH CITY COUNCIL

To: ANGUS KERR

Date: 29/12/2021

The Minister has cleared your submission of 14/12/2021 with the following comments:

'Agree with recommendation to call in.'

For further information etc. contact:

Dfl Private Office



Please consider the environment - do you really need to print this e-mail?

From:

Sent: 04 January 2022 16:58

To: 'conor.hughes@

Cc: 'david.burns@

Beggs, Alistair

Subject: Dfl Correspondence RE: Referral Directions - Notification LA0520181154O LA0520181155F - 04.01.21

Dear Mr. Hughes

Please see attached letter and Encl. from Angus Kerr, Chief Planner & Director of Regional Planning, Dfl for your attention.

Kind regards



Personal Secretary for Alistair Beggs, Director, Strategic Planning Directorate
| Department for Infrastructure |

Please consider the environment - do you really need to print this e-mail?

Regional Planning Directorate



Mr. Conor Hughes
Head of Planning and Capital Development
Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council
Civic Headquarters
Lagan Valley Island
LISBURN
BT27 4RL

Clarence Court
10-18 Adelaide Street
BELFAST
BT2 8GB
Tel: 0300 200 7830

Email:

Your reference: LA05/2018/1154/O &
LA05/2018/1155/F

Our reference: As above

04 January 2022

Dear Mr. Hughes

**PLANNING ACT (NORTHERN IRELAND) 2011
THE PLANNING (NOTIFICATION OF APPLICATIONS) DIRECTION 2017**

LA05/2018/1154/O - PROPOSED MIXED USE DEVELOPMENT TO INCLUDE NEW HOUSING (1300 DWELLINGS) AND COMMERCIAL FLOOR SPACE (754,000 SQUARE FEET) 1.6KM M1-KNOCKMORE LINK ROAD, RIVERSIDE PARKLAND AND ANCILLARY WORKS AT LANDS AT BLARIS LISBURN (LANDS BETWEEN EXISTING M1 JUNCTION 8/A101 ROUNDABOUT AND MOIRA ROAD/KNOCKMORE ROAD JUNCTION)

LA05/2018/1155/F - CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW LINK ROAD (1.6KM) CONNECTING THE EXISTING M1 JUNCTION 8/A101 ROUNDABOUT TO EXISTING MOIRA/KNOCKMORE ROAD JUNCTION AT LANDS AT BLARIS LISBURN (LANDS BETWEEN EXISTING M1 JUNCTION 8/A101 ROUNDABOUT AND MOIRA ROAD/KNOCKMORE ROAD JUNCTION)

I refer to the notifications, received on 12 May 2021 from Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council, in relation to the above planning applications.

The Department has determined that, under the terms of Section 29 of the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011, applications LA05/2018/1154/O and LA05/2018/1155/F are required to be referred to it for determination. Accordingly, Directions given in terms

of Section 29 have been enclosed for your attention. The Department has given these Directions in view of the proposed development's potential conflict with the Regional Development Strategy 2035, the local development plan for the area (Lisburn Area Plan 2001), the draft Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan 2015, regional planning policy contained within the Strategic Planning Policy Statement and Planning Policy Statements and the potential for the proposed development to impact on the implementation of the plan-led system. It is, therefore, considered to be an exceptional case and that the regional and sub-regional issues raised would benefit from further scrutiny by the Department.

Please be advised that copies of the enclosed Directions should be placed on your planning register which you are required to keep under the terms of Section 242 of the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011.

I would also like to remind you that it is the responsibility of the council to inform the applicant of these Directions. Article 10 of the Planning (General Development Procedure) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015 requires a council to serve a notice on the applicant setting out the terms of the Directions, any reasons given by the Department for requiring the applications to be referred to it, that the applications have been referred to the Department and that the decision of the Department is final.

I would be grateful if you could arrange for all documentation pertaining to the above planning applications to be forwarded to Mr. Alistair Beggs, Director of Strategic Planning, as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely

ANGUS KERR
Chief Planner
& Director of Regional Planning

Enc

cc: David Burns, LCCC Chief Executive
Alistair Beggs

Section 29(1) Direction

Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011

The Department for Infrastructure (DfI), in exercise of its powers conferred on it by Section 29(1) of the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011, hereby directs that Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council refer to it for determination the following application for planning permission, under the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011, received from Neptune Carleton LLP for:

Application reference: LA05/2018/1154/O

Proposal: Proposed mixed use development to include new housing (1300 dwellings) and commercial floor space (754,000 square feet) 1.6km M1-Knockmore Link Road, riverside parkland and ancillary works.

Location: Lands at Blaris Lisburn (lands between existing M1 Junction 8/A101 roundabout and Moira Road/Knockmore Road Junction)

The Department has given this Direction in view of the proposed development's potential conflict with the Regional Development Strategy 2035, the local development plan for the area (Lisburn Area Plan 2001), the draft Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan 2015, regional planning policy contained within the Strategic Planning Policy Statement and Planning Policy Statements and the potential for the proposed development to impact on the implementation of the plan-led system. It is, therefore, considered to be an exceptional case and that the regional and sub-regional issues raised would benefit from further scrutiny by the Department.

This Direction may be cited as the:-

Department for Infrastructure Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011, Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council, planning application LA05/2018/1154/O for proposed mixed use development at Blaris, Lisburn (S29) Direction 2022.

Angus Kerr
Chief Planner & Director of Regional Planning
Department for Infrastructure
Clarence Court
10-18 Adelaide Street
Belfast
BT2 8GB

Section 29(1) Direction

Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011

The Department for Infrastructure (DfI), in exercise of its powers conferred on it by Section 29(1) of the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011, hereby directs that Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council refer to it for determination the following application for planning permission, under the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011, received from Neptune Carleton LLP for:

Application reference: LA05/2018/1155/F

Proposal: Construction of a new link road (1.6km) connecting the existing M1 Junction 8/A101 roundabout to existing Moira/Knockmore Road Junction

Location: Lands at Blaris Lisburn (lands between existing M1 junction 8/A101 roundabout and Moira Road/Knockmore Road junction)

The Department has given this Direction as it considers it important for the associated full application, relating to the Knockmore Link Road proposal, to also be 'called in' so that there is a consistent and comprehensive approach and in order that the applications can be processed in parallel.

This Direction may be cited as the:-

Department for Infrastructure Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011, Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council, planning application LA05/2018/1155/F for a proposed new link road at Blaris, Lisburn, (S29) Direction 2022.

Angus Kerr
Chief Planner & Director of Regional Planning
Department for Infrastructure
Clarence Court
10-18 Adelaide Street
Belfast
BT2 8GB

From:
To: [DfI Press Office](#)
Subject: Press Enquiry
Date: 05 January 2022 15:14:41

Caution – This email has been received from outside the NICS network.
Please ensure you can verify the sender's name and email address.
Treat all attachments and links with caution.
FOR INTERNAL NICS STAFF ONLY - If you have any concerns regarding the email please forward to spam@finance-ni.gov.uk.

Hi

I have received a statement about planning applications in Lisburn, saying they are being delayed by a lack of decision making by the Minister I've pasted the statement below.
Would it be possible to get a response for Friday morning?
Thanks for your help

Two major planning applications approved by Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council in April 2021, proposing major residential, commercial and infrastructure developments that will deliver a new £500 million mixed use neighbourhood at Blaris in Lisburn, are being stalled by a lack of decision making by Minister Nichola Mallon and her planning officials in the Department for Infrastructure.

The proposals by developers, Neptune Carleton LLP, comprise 1300 new homes, including 130 affordable homes, a new neighbourhood shopping area, over 750,000 sq. ft. of commercial floorspace and a £15 million developer funded, 1.6km road and bridge over the River Lagan to connect the M1/A101 road corridors at Sprucefield, to a new junction at Moira Road/Knockmore Road.

The planning applications were lodged with Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council in November 2018 and were approved by its planning committee in April 2021.

Since April 2021, DfI officials have blocked LCCC from issuing formal planning permission, pending their own assessment of how the application was processed and whether or not they feel it warrants their intervention and 'call-in' of the planning applications.

Such a "call-in", would mark a seismic change in direction for the centrally retained DfI Planning team. It would wholly undermine the principle of major planning decisions being determined by locally elected Members of Council planning committees, that has been the hallmark of our planning process, since local government reform in 2015.

In effect it would amount to unelected and unaccountable civil servants wrestling back decision-making powers from local Councillors, preventing them from deciding how to plan and develop their own city.

The DfI block has been ongoing for seven months and the developers behind the scheme, Neptune Carleton LLP, say it is preventing hundreds of millions of pounds of investment within the city and the realisation of huge economic benefits, a vital boost to an effective economic recovery from the impacts of the COVID pandemic.

Despite the inaction of DfI, Neptune Carleton have continued progressing the detailed design of the new link road with DfI Roads and have secured the necessary funding, on the basis of making a construction start on the road in the first half of 2022. This is now in doubt.

The new road and bridge are a key driver to unlocking the growth of the city at West Lisburn, not only supporting the creation of new residential and commercial neighbourhoods but also facilitating the development of the long-awaited future link to the regionally important strategic development site at nearby Maze Long Kesh and the RUAS Eikon site.

Director of Neptune Carleton LLP, Mr Patrick Heffron said:

"We have worked very hard over the last five years to secure LCCC's planning committee approval for these hugely important infrastructure and development projects.

LCCC conducted an extremely professional, thorough, and robust examination of the applications which were then subject to a Pre-Determination Hearing and full consideration by the Planning Committee. The applications were strongly supported by both the locally elected public representatives and the community.

We have secured funding to deliver the £15 million M1-Knockmore road link and the scheme is now shovel ready for a start in the second quarter of 2022.

This is a scheme that has the potential to deliver around £500 million of economic benefit to the local economy and community over the next 10 to 15 years and it seems amazing to me that DfI seem to have no interest or imperative to see it happen.

We have waited 8 months now for a response from DfI and have heard nothing of note. We recently asked to meet the Minister to seek an update and express concern at the delay. Remarkably, Minister Mallon resisted a meeting and could not even offer any indication as to when DfI will release their block on the applications.

I have delivered many major property developments in areas across GB over the last 20 years and have never before encountered such a planning process where a Government Department is able to stall such significant applications in this way, with no engagement with either the Council's Planning Department or the applicant – there seems to be a total disconnection between planning and economic development. It has made me seriously re-assess future investment in Northern Ireland”.

ENDS



Ulster Star
Banbridge and Dromore Leader
Belfast News Letter Entertainments

*JPIMedia Publishing Limited Registered in England and Wales no. 11499982
Registered Office: Ohs Secretaries Limited, 107 Cheapside, London, EC2V 6DN*

Opinions expressed in this email are those of the writer and not the company. E-mail traffic is monitored within JPIMedia Publishing Limited and messages may be viewed. This e-mail and any files with it are solely for the use of the addressee(s). If you are not the intended recipient, you have received this e-mail in error. Please delete it or return it to the sender or notify us by email at postmaster@jpimedia.co.uk

From:
To: [DfI Press Office](#)
Subject: Re: PRESS RELEASE - £500 MILLION CITY EXPANSION AT BLARIS, LISBURN BEING BLOCKED BY DFI
Date: 10 January 2022 13:10:10
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[image002.png](#)
[image003.png](#)
[image004.png](#)
[image005.png](#)
[image006.png](#)
[image007.png](#)

Caution – This email has been received from outside the NICS network.
Please ensure you can verify the sender's name and email address.
Treat all attachments and links with caution.
FOR INTERNAL NICS STAFF ONLY - If you have any concerns regarding the email please forward to spam@finance-ni.gov.uk.

Please could you elaborate this afternoon what the "regional and sub-regional" issues are mentioned in the statement below?

Requested deadline 430pm please.

Many thanks

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **DfI Press Office** <Press.Office@infrastructure-ni.gov.uk>
Date: Thu, Jan 6, 2022 at 5:18 PM
Subject: RE: PRESS RELEASE - £500 MILLION CITY EXPANSION AT BLARIS, LISBURN BEING BLOCKED BY DFI

Cc: DfI Press Office <Press.Office@infrastructure-ni.gov.uk>

Sent: 05 January 2022 16:37

To: DfI Press Office <Press.Office@infrastructure-ni.gov.uk>

Subject: Re: PRESS RELEASE - £500 MILLION CITY EXPANSION AT BLARIS, LISBURN BEING BLOCKED BY DFI

Caution – This email has been received from outside the NICS network. Please ensure you can verify the sender's name and email address. Treat all attachments and links with caution.
FOR INTERNAL NICS STAFF ONLY - If you have any concerns regarding the email please forward to spam@finance-ni.gov.uk.

many thanks

On Wed, Jan 5, 2022 at 4:36 PM DfI Press Office <Press.Office@infrastructure-ni.gov.uk> wrote:

Hi

We will send on to officials and come back to you in the morning as requested.

From: [@newsletter.co.uk](mailto:)>
Sent: 05 January 2022 16:23
To: DfI Press Office <Press.Office@infrastructure-ni.gov.uk>
Subject: Fwd: PRESS RELEASE - £500 MILLION CITY EXPANSION AT BLARIS, LISBURN BEING BLOCKED BY DFI

Caution – This email has been received from outside the NICS network.
Please ensure you can verify the sender's name and email address.
Treat all attachments and links with caution.
FOR INTERNAL NICS STAFF ONLY - If you have any concerns regarding the email please forward to spam@finance-ni.gov.uk.

Ladies and gents

Could we get a line on this for the morning please?

Many thanks

On Wed, Jan 5, 2022 at 2:59 PM

wrote:

Hi

Just wanted to send you the below on behalf of Neptune Carleton LLP, thought it might be of interest to you?

Thanks

£500 MILLION CITY EXPANSION AT BLARIS, LISBURN BEING BLOCKED BY DFI

Two major planning applications approved by Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council in April 2021, proposing major residential, commercial and infrastructure developments that will deliver a new £500 million mixed use neighbourhood at Blaris in Lisburn, are being stalled by a lack of decision making by Minister Nichola Mallon and her planning officials in the Department for Infrastructure.

The proposals by developers, Neptune Carleton LLP, comprise 1300 new homes, including 130 affordable homes, a new neighbourhood shopping area, over 750,000 sq. ft. of commercial floorspace and a £15 million developer funded, 1.6km road and bridge over the River Lagan to connect the M1/A101

road corridors at Sprucefield, to a new junction at Moira Road/Knockmore Road.

The planning applications were lodged with Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council in November 2018 and were approved by its planning committee in April 2021.

Since April 2021, DfI officials have blocked LCCC from issuing formal planning permission, pending their own assessment of how the application was processed and whether or not they feel it warrants their intervention and 'call-in' of the planning applications.

Such a "call-in", would mark a seismic change in direction for the centrally retained DfI Planning team. It would wholly undermine the principle of major planning decisions being determined by locally elected Members of Council planning committees, that has been the hallmark of our planning process, since local government reform in 2015.

In effect it would amount to unelected and unaccountable civil servants wrestling back decision-making powers from local Councillors, preventing them from deciding how to plan and develop their own city.

The DfI block has been ongoing for seven months and the developers behind the scheme, Neptune Carleton LLP, say it is preventing hundreds of millions of pounds of investment within the city and the realisation of huge economic benefits, a vital boost to an effective economic recovery from the impacts of the COVID pandemic.

Despite the inaction of DfI, Neptune Carleton have continued progressing the detailed design of the new link road with DfI Roads and have secured the necessary funding, on the basis of making a construction start on the road in the first half of 2022. This is now in doubt.

The new road and bridge are a key driver to unlocking the growth of the city at West Lisburn, not only supporting the creation of new residential and commercial neighbourhoods but also facilitating the development of the long-awaited future link to the regionally important strategic development site at nearby Maze Long Kesh and the RUAS Eikon site.

Director of Neptune Carleton LLP, Mr Patrick Heffron said:

"We have worked very hard over the last five years to secure LCCC's planning committee approval for these hugely important infrastructure and development projects. LCCC conducted an extremely professional, thorough, and robust examination of the applications which were then subject to a Pre-Determination Hearing and full consideration by the Planning Committee. The applications were strongly supported by both the locally elected public representatives and the community.

We have secured funding to deliver the £15 million M1-Knockmore road link and the scheme is now shovel ready for a start in the second quarter of 2022.

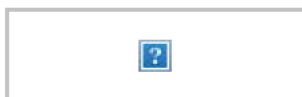
This is a scheme that has the potential to deliver around £500 million of economic benefit to the local economy and community over the next 10 to 15 years and it seems amazing to me that DfI seem to have no interest or imperative to see it happen.

We have waited 8 months now for a response from DfI and have heard nothing of note. We recently asked to meet the Minister to seek an update and express concern at the delay. Remarkably, Minister Mallon resisted a

meeting and could not even offer any indication as to when DfI will release their block on the applications.

I have delivered many major property developments in areas across GB over the last 20 years and have never before encountered such a planning process where a Government Department is able to stall such significant applications in this way, with no engagement with either the Council's Planning Department or the applicant – there seems to be a total disconnection between planning and economic development. It has made me seriously re-assess future investment in Northern Ireland”.

ENDS



From:
To: [DfI Press Office](#)
Subject: RE: Blaris/Neptune Carleton
Date: 10 January 2022 15:55:32

Caution – This email has been received from outside the NICS network.
Please ensure you can verify the sender's name and email address.
Treat all attachments and links with caution.
FOR INTERNAL NICS STAFF ONLY - If you have any concerns regarding the email please forward to spam@finance-ni.gov.uk.

Thanks

Could the department elaborate on “the regional and sub-regional issues raised” (second par) in respect of the reason for calling in the planning applications?

Even just for guidance?

Kind regards,

THE IRISH NEWS

rom:

Sent: 10 January 2022 10:49

To: DfI Press Office <Press.Office@infrastructure-ni.gov.uk>

Subject: [SUSPECTED SPAM] Blaris/Neptune Carleton

Hi there,

The following statement (attached below) has been issued on behalf of the developers behind a major housing/commercial scheme approved by Lisburn City Council in April 2021.

It includes strong criticism of the department and the minister.

- 1) Can DfI outline the steps it has taken/the extent to which it has become involved in the case since planning application was approved in April 2021?
- 2) Can DfI outline the reasons for its involvement in the case?
- 3) Is there an ongoing 'assessment' of the process by LCCC, and has any decision been taken in respect of a 'call in'?
- 4) Can DfI respond to the accusations of "inaction, lack of communication and clarity" and whether it's involvement in the case represents a 'block' on the development?

DEADLINE: Asap

Kind regards,

STATEMENT

Two major planning applications approved by Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council in April 2021, which would provide significant housing, commercial and transport links, are being stalled by a lack of decision making by Minister Nichola Mallon and planning officials in the Department for Infrastructure (DfI).

The proposals by developers Neptune Carleton LLP, would deliver a new £500 million neighbourhood at Blaris in Lisburn, with 1,300 new homes, including 130 affordable homes, a new community shopping area, over 750,000 sq. ft. of commercial floorspace and a £15 million developer fund. It would also see a new 1.6km road and bridge over the River Lagan to connect the M1/A101 road corridors at Sprucefield to a new junction at Moira Road/Knockmore Road.

The planning applications were lodged with Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council (LCCC) in November 2018 and were approved by its planning committee in April 2021.

Since April 2021, DfI officials have blocked LCCC from issuing formal planning permission, pending their own assessment of how the application was processed and whether or not they feel it warrants their intervention and 'call-in' of the planning applications.

The DfI block has been ongoing for eight months and the developers behind the scheme, Neptune Carleton LLP, say it is preventing hundreds of millions of pounds of investment within the city and the realisation of huge economic benefits, a vital boost to an effective economic recovery from the impacts of the COVID pandemic.

According to the developers, such a 'call-in', would mark a seismic change in direction for the centrally retained DfI Planning team. Director of Neptune Carleton LLP, Mr Patrick Heffron said:

"We have worked very hard over the last five years to secure LCCC's planning committee approval for these hugely important infrastructure and development projects. LCCC conducted an extremely professional, thorough, and robust examination of the applications which were then subject to a Pre-Determination Hearing and full consideration by the Planning Committee. The applications were strongly supported by both the locally elected public representatives and the community.

"DfI's inaction, lack of communication and clarity, wholly undermines the principle of major planning decisions being determined by locally elected Members of Council planning committees, that has been the hallmark of the planning process, since local government reform in 2015. In effect it would amount to unelected and unaccountable civil servants wrestling back decision-making powers from local Councillors, preventing them from deciding how to plan and develop their own city. We have waited eight months now for a response from DfI and have heard nothing of note.

"We recently asked to meet the Minister to seek an update and express concern at the delay. Remarkably, Minister Mallon resisted a meeting and could not even offer any indication as to when DfI will release their block on the applications."

Despite the inaction of DfI, Neptune Carleton has continued progressing the detailed design of the new link road with DfI Roads and has secured the necessary funding, on the basis of making a construction start on the road in the first half of 2022. This is now in doubt.

Mr Patrick Heffron added: "We have secured funding to deliver the £15 million M1-Knockmore road link and the scheme is now shovel ready for a start in the second quarter of 2022. This is a scheme that has the potential to deliver around £500 million of economic benefit to the local economy and community over the next 10 to 15 years and it seems amazing to me that DfI appear to have no interest or imperative to see it happen.

"I have delivered many major property developments in areas across GB over the last 20 years and have never before encountered such a planning process where a Government Department is able to stall such significant applications in this way, with no engagement with either the Council's Planning Department or the applicant – there seems to be a total disconnection between planning and economic development. It has made me seriously re-assess future investment in Northern Ireland."

From:
To: [DfI Press Office](#)
Subject: Blaris call-in
Date: 11 January 2022 13:16:04

Caution – This email has been received from outside the NICS network.
Please ensure you can verify the sender's name and email address.
Treat all attachments and links with caution.

FOR INTERNAL NICS STAFF ONLY - If you have any concerns regarding the email please forward to spam@finance-ni.gov.uk.

Hi.

Following up media reports that the DfI has formally called in proposals for a major development on the outskirts of Lisburn involving 1,300 new homes, a link road and 750,000 square feet of commercial development. The scheme is called Blaris and was backed by the local council Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council. Has the department intervened? What are the grounds for call-in ? Grateful for a response by noon tomorrow (12 January). Or sooner.

Regards