Drumbeg: Planning Policy and Tourism Law

Public information guide | Quarterlands Group supporting Hermitage residents | 15 October 2026

Proposals: 17 houses at Quarterlands Road (LA05/2022/0033/F) and a holiday park at Ballyskeagh Road (LA05/2026/0608/PAN). The holiday park remains at pre-application notice stage, not a grant of planning permission. This guide identifies issues to examine; it does not establish that either proposal breaches planning law.

The starting point: adopted local planning policy

The Lisburn & Castlereagh Local Development Plan 2032 Plan Strategy, adopted September 2023, provides the relevant operational policies. Under section 6(4) of the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011, determinations that must have regard to the LDP are to be made in accordance with it unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Check the adopted maps and the applicable policy wording before submitting comments. Read: Part 1, adopted Plan Strategy and Part 2, operational policies

Strategic context: consult adopted Part 1 for Lagan Valley Regional Park AONB and the Plan Strategy framework. Policy tests below are in adopted Part 2; printed page numbers are provided for each policy.

NH6: Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (printed p.89)

For both proposals, examine siting, scale, landscape character, traditional boundaries and important landscape features. Request a clear assessment of the particular qualities of Lagan Valley AONB at Drumbeg. Source: Adopted Part 2 (see policy/page cited above)

COU1: Development in the Countryside (p.29)

Require the applicant to identify the precise policy basis for development in this countryside location. Housing and tourism are not interchangeable categories. Source: Adopted Part 2 (see policy/page cited above)

COU15 and COU16: Integration, design and rural character (pp.39–40)

Examine whether development integrates through existing landform and natural features, rather than relying mainly on new planting; assess prominence, urbanising effects, roads, lighting and hardstanding. Source: Adopted Part 2 (see policy/page cited above)

TOU5: Holiday Parks in the Countryside (pp.62–63)

For Ballyskeagh, assess whether the site can absorb the proposed holiday park without adverse visual or rural-character effects; examine existing screening and the communal open-space and layout provisions. Source: Adopted Part 2 (see policy/page cited above)

TOU7: General Criteria for Tourism Development (p.64)

Ask for evidence concerning neighbouring residential amenity, landscape, natural heritage, drainage, effluent and compatibility with surrounding uses. Source: Adopted Part 2 (see policy/page cited above)

NH2 and NH5: Protected species and natural heritage (pp.86, 88)

Check survey quality and timing, priority species and habitats, hedgerows, wildlife corridors and lighting. The historic Quarterlands hedgerow and local species records may provide relevant evidence, but site-specific assessment is needed. Source: Adopted Part 2 (see policy/page cited above)

HOU1, HOU3 and HOU4: Housing (pp.9–11)

HOU1 concerns housing in settlements. First verify the Quarterlands site's position relative to the settlement boundary and identify which housing policies apply, alongside the countryside provisions. Source: Adopted Part 2 (see policy/page cited above)

TOU6: Major Tourism Development (p.63)

Consider only if the holiday park falls within the policy's defined scope. Site size alone does not establish applicability. Source: Adopted Part 2 (see policy/page cited above)

Environmental Impact Assessment screening

The Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2017, Schedule 2, include holiday villages and hotel complexes outside urban areas. The Ballyskeagh drawing identifies a 6.38-hectare site within an AONB. The Council should explain its EIA screening position, taking account of the development classification, protected landscape, potential significant effects and cumulative impacts. Screening does not automatically mean that a full Environmental Impact Assessment is required.

Tourist accommodation and occupancy

The Tourism (Northern Ireland) Order 1992 provides for statutory tourist accommodation certification. The Caravans Act (Northern Ireland) 1963 and licensing requirements may apply if proposed units are legally caravans. Request clarity on the legal classification of lodges/chalets, individual ownership, whether the site is operated commercially, any ten-month restriction, primary-residence controls and enforcement. Planning permission, tourism certification and caravan site licensing are distinct matters.

Additional evidence

Request site-specific information on wastewater capacity and how it is measured; flood risk and drainage; traffic and access; protected species; lighting; historic boundaries; residential amenity; and cumulative landscape effects. Refer to the relevant adopted FLD, UT, TRA and other policies where applicable.

Quarterlands-hosted copies of the adopted September 2023 LDP:

Part 1: Plan Strategy (strategic context, Lagan Valley and transitional arrangements)

Part 2: Operational Policies (COU, TOU, NH and HOU, printed pages cited above)

Official sources and further reading

LDP adopted operational policies: https://lisburncastlereagh.gov.uk/documents/d/guest/local_development_plan_2032_-_part_2_operational_policies

Adopted plan and mapping: https://lisburncastlereagh.gov.uk/w/adopted-plan-strategy

Planning Register: https://planningregister.planningsystemni.gov.uk/

Planning Act 2011, section 6: https://www.legislation.gov.uk/nia/2011/25/section/6

EIA Regulations 2017: https://www.legislation.gov.uk/nisr/2017/83/contents

Tourism Order 1992: https://www.legislation.gov.uk/nisi/1992/235/contents

Caravans Act (NI) 1963: https://www.legislation.gov.uk/apni/1963/17/contents

Source note: Policy page numbers refer to printed pages in the adopted Part 2 PDF. The linked official legislation pages should be consulted for amendments and current wording. The status and precise classification of the holiday park remain to be established at full application stage.