

Ballyward and Dechomet Village Renewal Plan

Newry, Mourne and Down District Council



















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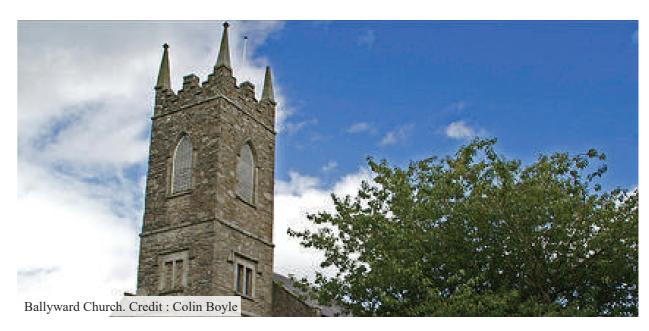
Introduction

This document explores and illustrates the village renewal plans for Ballyward and Dechomet, Slieve Croob. The purpose of the village renewal plan is to revive and enhance the social, economic and environmental fabric of the settlement and the communities that underpin their activity and future development. Building on this, the communities within each settlement have helped craft and shape the contents of the renewal plan through an extensive consultation process entailing village walkabouts with local community representatives, extensive desktop research and community workshops to help create the most reflective plan possible. Having established this, the document provides Ballyward and Dechomet with their own relevant and distinctive section to illustrate and explore each of their settlements respectively.

The settlements of Ballyward and Dechomet rest along the corridor connecting Dromara with Rathfriland. The settlements offer strategic connectivity due to their access with the A1 to the North West and A2 to the South East. Building on this, the settlements of Ballyward and Dechomet express a similar unique rural and picturesque character.

Both settlements are strategically located nearby Rathfriland and Castlewellan which act as key servicing areas for both communities, whilst Banbridge and Newcastle act as the nearest urban centres for the wider rural area. Having established this, the unique character and setting of each rural village within the area must be protected and preserved throughout their future development.

Having established this, the role of the village renewal plan is to provide a community built tool kit in order to guide and navigate the future development of Ballyward and Dechomet. The preservation and expression of local character, culture and heritage is key in the development of vibrant, strong and distinctive communities.









The Village Renewal Plan

The Village Renewal Plan has been developed by the community in conjunction with Newry, Mourne and Down District Council to meet the requirements of the Rural Development Programme for Northern Ireland 2014-2020.

Ove Arup and Partners (Arup) was appointed as the consultancy team to facilitate the delivery of the Village Renewal Plan for Ballyward and Dechomet. This Village Renewal Plan has been facilitated by a stakeholder workshop. The outcome of this is a Village Renewal Plan which includes a range of projects and initiatives that we believe will have a real impact on the area.

The Village Renewal Plan was funded under Priority 6 (LEADER) of the Northern Ireland Rural Development Programme 2014-2020 by the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs and the European Union, and Newry, Mourne and Down District Council.

The Rural Development Programme uses the LEADER approach which adopts a community led model to assist rural communities to improve the quality of life and economic prosperity in their local area, through the allocation of funds based on local need. Village Renewal and Development is an important element of the Rural Development Programme.

The Village Plan is a working document that requires the support of the community and in many cases the community working in partnership with other agencies and statutory bodies.

It should be noted that the progressing of a Village Plan' under the Rural Development Programme does not mean that the settlement or area, to which the 'Village Plan' applies, is designated as a village in the settlement hierarchy as identified in the current development plans that apply to the District (i.e. the Banbridge/Newry and Mourne Area Plan 2015, and the Ards and Down Area Plan 2015) or in the Council's new Local Development Plan for the District, which is currently under preparation.

It is important to note that some projects and initiatives set out within the action plan may be subject to future feasibility studies and analysis, detailed design, landowner agreements, statutory approvals and available funding.





A1 | Context Ballyward

Village Location

The village of Ballyward comprises a small village and parish community situated 5 miles north of Castlewellan in rural Co. Down. The settlement rests along the main A50 road which provides strong linkages with Castlewellan to the south east and further onto proximal rural settlements.

Village Character

The village and townland offer a traditional rural experience enriched by the Ballyward Church which dominates and commands the centre of the settlement at the junction of Ballyward and Station Road. Additionally, the disused railway track historically passed through the village to the north at Station Road with remains of the oringal structure still present today. Furthermore, a significant asset in the form of the Ballyward Lake resides within the grounds of Ballyward Lodge. Ballyward Lodge is the demesne of an early-19th-century house, which is set in parkland with mature forestry and views of the lake and the Mourne mountains. There is an extensive formal ornamental garden, a walled garden with an orchard, garden house and established lodge.



History and Development of the Village

Historically, the townland of Ballyward concentrated its development at the present junction at Station and Ballyward Road, adjacent the Ballyward Church. The village formed a small cluster of development at this junction and facilitated for workers within the mill situated along Station Road. Additionally, the village developed further west via the private lands of Ballyward Lodge, comprising a lake, landscaped walled gardens and the associated Ballyward House. As time progressed, between 1846-1862 saw the townland grow northward along the curvature of Station Road, consolidating development adjacent the corn mill. Furthermore, Ballyward established a school house, Post Office and constabulary barrack around this section of the settlement. Moving forward, by 1905, Ballyward had benefited greatly via the establishment of the train station to the north of Station road

Village Profile

The village of Ballyward has a predominately youthful population with 25.28% of residents under 16 years of age, whilst 12.03% of residents are aged 65+. Having established this, in relation to the general health status of the area the village comprises a predominantly healthy population with 84.24% of people stating that their health was either good or very good, whereas 16.15% of people had stated that they had a long term health problem or disability that impacted their daily activities. Additionally, 11.96% of people had stated that they receive unpaid care via family, friends or close neighbours. In relation to future development of services and amenities, the needs of each demographic sector must be considered accordingly.

Settlement Development Limit

The settlement development limit has been created to consider of the role of the village and existing permissions and facilitation for new development, whilst safe guarding the extremely attractive natural surroundings within Mourne Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). The limit will preserve the setting of the townland and limit further encroachment of development into the surrounding countryside. Furthermore, the settlement limit excludes land to the north, to protect the disused rail bed, and prevents ribbon development along Station road.















Recent and Future Development

Future Development

In relation to future housing development schemes, the Banbridge, Newry and Mourne Area Plan 2015 (BNMAP 2015) does not set aside any designated land zoning for resiential development schemes. Building on this, the Area Plan does distinguish and outline the settlement development limit to which

Recent Development

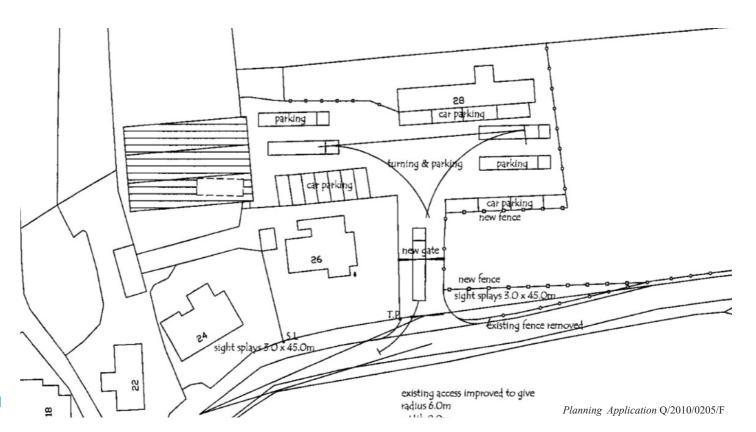
Erection of workshop and store. Planning Ref. Q/2010/0205/F. Status: Permission Granted

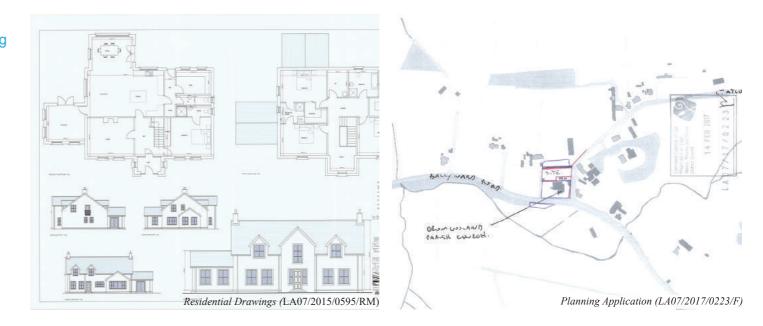
Planning application to develop additional space for a private unit within the village at lands adjacent 26 Station Road.

Replacement pf Private Residential Dwelling. Planning Ref. LA07/2015/0595/RM Status: Permission Granted

Replacement dwelling and detached garage using new access to public road at lands 45m South West of 18 Station Road.

Improvements at Drumgooland Parish Church. Planning Ref. LA07/2017/0223/F Status: Application Pending Car parking for use by church congregation and extension to existing graveyard.





The development above highlights the growing need for services and amenities within the village to facilitate the continous population growth of Crossgar and the wider rural area.

A2 Policy Analysis

A2.1 Planning Policy

Regional Development Strategy 2035 'Building a Better Future'

The Regional Development Strategy (RDS) is a statutory plan, and sets the spatial vision for the region up to the year 2035. One of the central aims of the RDS id to support our towns, villages and rural communities to maximise their potential.

Our rural areas including our towns and villages have a key role in supporting economic growth. They offer opportunities in terms of their potential for growth in new sectors, the provision of rural recreation and tourism, their attractiveness as places to invest, live and work, and their role as a reservoir of natural resources and highly valued landscapes (RDS, p19)

The RDS sets out Strategic Guidance for the economic, society and the environment. RG7 highlights the need to support rural renaissance which is about revitalising the centres of small towns and villages so that they meet the immediate needs of the communities they serve.

The RDS emphasises the need to sustain rural communities living in smaller settlements and the open countryside and to improve accessibility for rural communities.

Strategic Planning Policy Statement (SPPS) 'Shaping a Better future'

The SPPS covers the whole of Northern Ireland and sets out the strategic policies for the sustainable development of the region, which it defines as "meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs".

The policy objectives for development in the countryside are to:

- manage growth to achieve appropriate and sustainable patterns of development which supports a vibrant rural community;
- conserve the landscape and natural resources of the rural area and to protect it from excessive, inappropriate or obtrusive development and from the actual or potential effects of pollution;
- facilitate development which contributes to a sustainable rural economy; and
- promote high standards in the design, siting and landscaping of development.

Banbridge, Newry and Mourne Area Plan 2015

The Banbridge, Newry and Mourne Area Plan (BNMAP) was adopted in October 2013 and sets a number of site specific statutory policies relevant to Ballyward village that should be taken into consideration by developers, landowners, the Council and the local community in the forward planning of the Village.

The Area Plan outlines key planning considerations and land designations to guide sny future dvelopment within the village. Due to its strategic location, there is a natural pressure to accommodate residential expansion of the village. In relation to residential growth within the village, the area plan outlines that no social housing is required within the village.

BNMAP identifies 2 Local Landscape Policy Areas located at the Ballyward Road and Old Station in order to preserve, protect and enhance the character, integrity and environmental quality of the area.

Living Well Together: Newry, Mourne and Down District Council's Community Plan (2016)

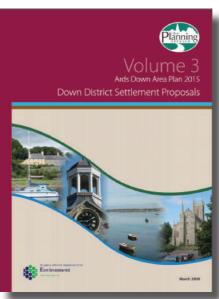
Community planning is a new function of Councils here in Northern Ireland since the reorganisation of local government in 2014. Councils have a requirement to create a Community Planning Partnership for their District whose role is to work in collaboration with all partners to achieve the aspirations of the Community Plan.

The overarching principles of the Plan are ensuring effective community engagement in the planning and delivery of services, utilising the strengths and resilience within communities, promoting equality and tackling inequality, adopting a preventative approach, driving efficiency and performance improvement, supporting a sustainable approach to development, holding each other as partners to account for delivering the community plan outcomes in collaboration and creating a Partnership Board responsible for monitoring and directing impact.

Emerging Local Development Plan

The Local Development Plan (LDP) will deliver a 15-year plan framework to support economic and social needs in the District, in line with regional strategies and policies, while providing the delivery of sustainable development. The new Local Development Plan will be the key consideration in the determination of planning applications for the development or use of land in the Council area. The next stage of the LDP process is the publication of the preferred options paper which will contain a series of options for dealing with key issues in the District, as well as the Council's justification for its proposed approach. The POP will indicate the Council's preferred options for growth and development in the District. The POP will be subject to public consultation. It is at this stage in the plan preparation process, that the public and stakeholders will have their first opportunity to put forward views and influence the LDP.







A2.2 Other Strategies, Plans and Initiatives

The Village Plan seeks to align with wider strategies and plans for the District, taking into account the importance of local assets of natural surrounding beauty in encouraging tourism and economic development into the area, and finding areas of complementarity where different stakeholders could work together to deliver shared ideas and projects. Below is a snapshot of the strategies and plans that have been taken into consideration in the development of the Village Plan.

NMDDC Corporate Plan 2015-2019

The Newry Mourne and Down District Council Corporate Plan for 2015-2019 aims to envisage a new era for the District. The plan strives to strike a balance between the ambitions of the district whilst taking account of key issues which can influence the future of the district area and its population. Additionally, the corporate plan aims to create opportunities for local people and local communities to thrive by supporting sustainable economic growth over time and helping them to lead fulfilling lifestyles. The visionary stance of the strategy aims to create a district that is that is attractive to visit and do business, where people and communities can unlock their enterprising spirit as well as play their part in contributing to its social and economic development along with a district that facilitates and encourages healthy lifestyles. By 2019, the corporate plan will aspire to create a premier tourism destination for the island of Ireland, attract investment and support the creation of new jobs and support the improved health and well-being of its people.

Economic Regeneration & Investment Strategy 2015-2020

The Strategy aims to develop the Newry, Mourne and Down region to be recognised as a vibrant, dynamic and connected region of enterprise and economic growth; a place of sustainable natural beauty and a premier tourist destination encompassing excellence in culture and arts and enabling and creating opportunities for all. The Strategy is developed around five themes: 1.) Economic Development, 2.) Tourism Development, Marketing, Promotion and Events, 3.) Urban Development and Regeneration, 4.) Rural Development and Regeneration, 5.) Arts, Culture and Heritage. The strategy aims to develop a synergy between the five themes that need to be developed in the period to 2020. Within each theme we have a number of strategic priorities which will be delivered against.

Newry, Mourne and Down District Council Tourism Strategy 2017-2022

The Tourism Strategy for Newry, Mourne and Down aims to maximise tourism growth for the district area by adopting a new and fresh approach that recognises the distinctive elements and strengths which sets the district apart to other destinations. The Tourism Strategy focuses on a key thematic headline 'Mountains, Myths and Maritime' which outline the core elements that shape a distinctive and strong image for Newry, Mourne and Down.

Newry, Mourne and Down Sports Facility Strategy 2016

The purpose of the Strategy is to identify the strategic need for Sports facilities in Newry, Mourne and Down District Council. This is one of 11 Local Strategies to be developed in the context of the NI-wide work. A consistent approach to developing the Local Strategies has been undertaken. The same methodology for applying supply and demand standards for sports halls, swimming pools and health and fitness facilities have been used in all 11 Local Authority Strategies and agreed with Sport NI. The Strategy rationale is to develop a framework for the future prioritisation and development of sporting facilities within the district.

Newry, Mourne and Down District Council Play Strategy 2017-2022

The purpose of the Newry, Mourne and Down District Council Play Strategy is to establish an effective strategic framework for decision making as it relates to the development, maintenance and roll-out of play opportunities (both fixed and non-fixed) across the district.

At the core of the strategy is a recognition that play is a natural, fundamental part of children and young people"s lives that supports growth and development, enhances health and well-being, supports social and intellectual development, and enables children and young people to develop essential life skills. Importantly for children, play is fun.

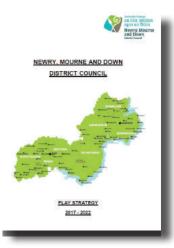
Despite the importance of play, children and young people face a wide range of barriers and restrictions that prevent them from playing in a way that meets their needs. Such barriers range from a lack of accessible play spaces within communities to increased levels of traffic that have reduced street play opportunities; from uninspiring fixed play areas that lack challenge to a lack of provision for children with disabilities; and at a broader societal level adult intolerance of children and young people playing outdoors.

Department for Infrastructure Strategic Plan for Greenways (July 2016)

In July 2016, The Department for Infrastructure published its Strategic Plan for Greenways which seeks to fulfil a commitment in the Bicycle Strategy (2015) in order to explore the possibility for the development of greenways throughout the region. It sets out a high level plan for the overall region to enable people to connect to places locally, regionally and nationally by active forms of travel. In relation to Ballyward, the area will substantially benefit via the future implementation of the Banbridge to Newcastle Greenway which runs through settlement.

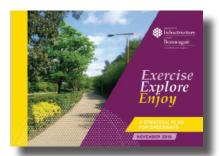
















A3 Consultation Process

The Ballyward Village Plan has been developed in collaboration with the local community. Key aspects of the process are outlined below.

Village walkabout

A community walkabout took place on 23rd May 2017 with representatives of the Council, the consultant team, and the local community. During this time a site survey was carried out to understand the background and context of the Village, key assets, issues and potential ideas for how the Village could be improved.

Community Event

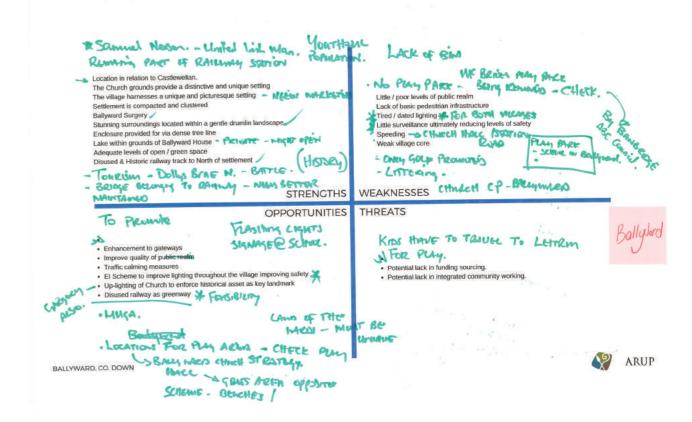
A public consultation event was held on the evening of 26th September in Turely's Bar and Lounge, Dechomet. The purpose of the event was to present the findings of the desktop research, site walkabout and roundtable workshop, together with draft proposals for actions and priorities for tackling the issues identified by the local community and village analysis work.

The event was publicly advertised via the Council's website and social media. Council officers also distributed details of the event to community and voluntary groups in the area, and a public advertisement was placed in the newspaper.

This draft Village Plan was then prepared and published for public consultation in January 2018.



Consultation Venue - Turley's Bar, Dechomet





A4 Site Analysis



Strengths

- History A strong village character through historic cultural heritage
- Old Railway Offer a distinctive and historic setting
- Youth A growing and active youthful population
- Previous Inhabitants Samuel Neilson, a United Irishman
- Setting A unique, picturesque and rural landscape
- Tourism Dolly's Brae Battleground nearby
- Church Offers a commanding presence within the village



- EIS Enhancement to street lighting within the village to improve levels of safety
- Church Up-lighting of church to strengthen historic character
- MUGA Enhancement of play value within the village will benefit youthful population
- Defibulator Opportunity to implement one within the village



Weaknesses

- Play Facilities No Play facilities within settlement forcing users to travel to Leitrim
- Refuse collection lack of bins within the village
- Street Lighting Poor quality, standard and condition of street lighting
- Speeding A key concern within the village
- Littering Due to lack of public bin provision
- Gateways lack of gateways undermines the character of the village



Threats

- Funding lack of potential future funding for projects
- Collaboration potential lack in integrated community working
- Play facilities Absence of Play facilities will harm youthful development
- Speeding will remain a concern if not addressed



Ballyward: Village Analysis

Heritage Site



GP / Surgery



Bus Stop



Church & Associated Sites



Retailer / Business



Village Gateway



Primary Road



Secondary Road



Protected Route



oooo Disused Railway



Local Landscape Policy Area



Area of Archaeological Potential

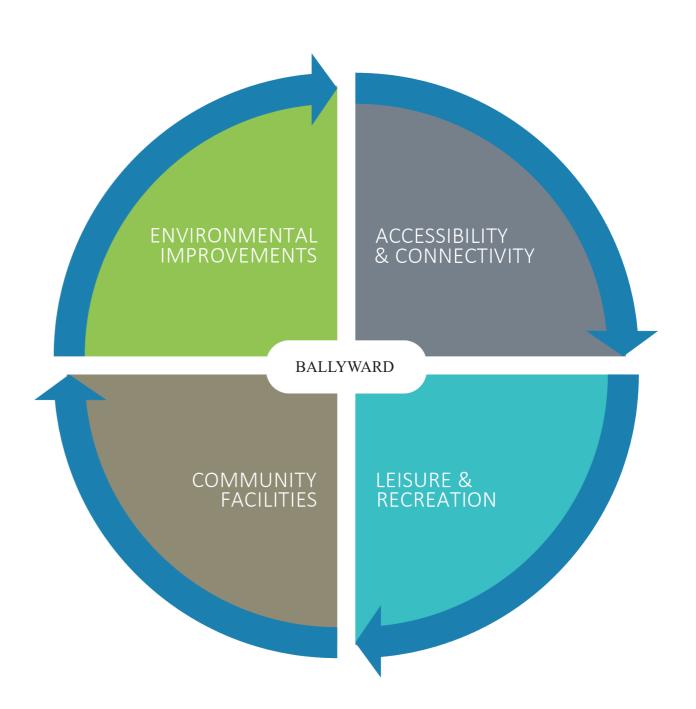
Note - The entire area of this map lies within the Mourne Area of Outstanding Naural Beauty

A5 Opportunities

Following consultation with the community of Ballyward, various projects have been identified which could contribute to the social and physical renewal of the village. The projects outlined in this draft plan are aspirations which are achievable with the relevant support. Constraints will face all the projects identified such as land ownership, funding and the requirement for statutory consents. However, such constraints can be addressed and overcome through dedicated and ongoing work by the community and other key stakeholders.

The opportunities presented in this plan range from enhancement of village gateways to improved street lighting along with a village MUGA. One of the key projects identified aims to address the poor condition of the village gateway sites within Ballyward by enhancing the environmental and physical quality of their appearance. A further opportunity which would be of substantial benefit to the community improve the quality and standard of street lighting with the village. Furthermore, an opportunity to explore the potential for a MUGA within Ballyward to link with a possible community HUB could help harness the future development of the community.

Please note that all illustrations within this plan are conceptual. Any improvements to Ballyward will require the development of detailed designs through consultation with local businesses and residents.





06 Opportunities

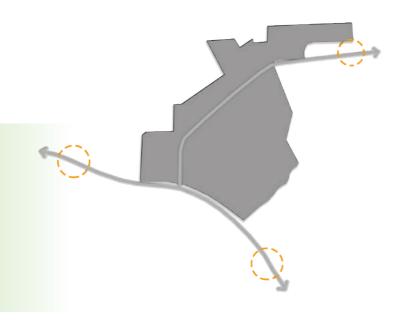
A | GATEWAYS IMPROVEMENTS

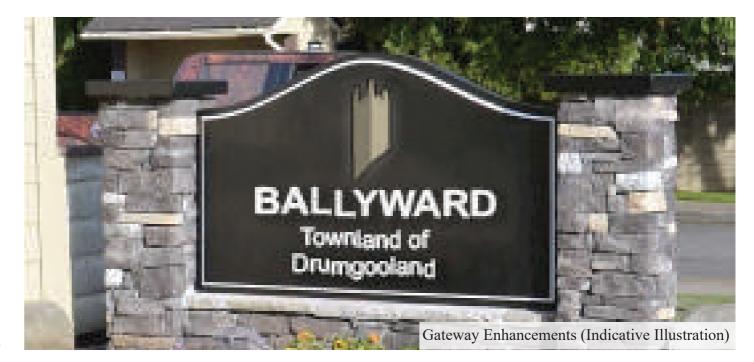
A project to revitalise the key gateway sites within the village to improve the visual quality of Ballyward upon entry. The village comprises three gateway sites situated at the Ballyward, Castlewellan and the Station Road which offer primary access into the village. The railway bridge located along the Derryneill Road offers a gateway into the Ballyward area and should be improved in relation to wayfinding and gateway signage.

The project will include the environmental improvement of current gateway sites through high quality hard and soft landscaping, boundary treatment landmark features and improved signage. By implementing such measures in a holistic manner, the gateway sites of Ballyward will dramatically enhance the entrance points of the area providing an uplifting and renewed character to Ballyward.

Building on this, the current condition of the village gateways are in need of urgent attention in order to revitalise the character of the community and settlement. The project has the potential to address this issue within the village and so help the village of Ballyward fulfil is maximal potential.

in order to deliver this project, further consultation with the community and key stakeholders is needed to assess the feasibility and support for such an initiative. Furthermore, a detailed business case, design and feasibility study is required alongside statutory approvals and necessary funding if required.







ENHANCING THE GATEWAY

The quality of the physical environment of a Village gateway has the ability to express the character of the village. A project which aims to enhance the Village entry points to revitalise the unique and picturesque setting of the Village.



B | ENHANCED STREET LIGHTING

VILLAGE IMPROVEMENTS

High quality environmental improvements play an important role in creating an improved and safe environment. Both pedestrians and road users are provided with a sense of security and safety.

A project to improve the standard, quality and condition of street lighting within Ballyward to improve the levels of safety and surveillance within the village. Due to the scale and layout of the village, enhanced street lighting throughout the village core would uplift the physical environment of Ballyward whilst safeguarding levels of road and pedestrian safety.

The project would include the replacement of current sodium based street lighting bulbs with high quality LED lighting providing a crisp, clean and energy efficient street lighting for the community. The quality and condition of street lighting within the village is extremely tired and date with urgent need of improvement to revitalise the overall quality of Ballyward. The project has the potential to regenerate the character, quality and physical appearance of Ballyward to provide a renewed sense of place for the community.

in order to deliver this project, further consultation with the community and key stakeholders is needed to assess the feasibility and support for such an initiative. Furthermore, a detailed business case, design and feasibility study is required alongside statutory approvals and necessary funding if required.







OLD STATION GREENWAY HUB

A project to support a future greenway to pass through the village of Ballyward, North of Station Road. As part of the Department for Infrastructure's Strategic Plan for Greenways, a 36km Greenway connecting Banbridge with Newcastle (indicative cost: £5.4m) will utilise the track of the previous railway line which passes through the village from the North. The project aims to support this future project by enhancing the relationship between the village and the railway track by developing a HUB at the Old Station.

The project will aim to integrate the community with the greenway by creating a Greenway HUB to provide servicing for cyclists, catering services for both the community and users of the greenway along with a tourism information for the local area and settlement history. The old railway line expresses a rich and unchallenged character for the village although its current condition is unkempt and in need of future enhancement to fulfil and restore its potential. This project has the opportunity to market and express the village whilst providing synergy between the local community and greenway.

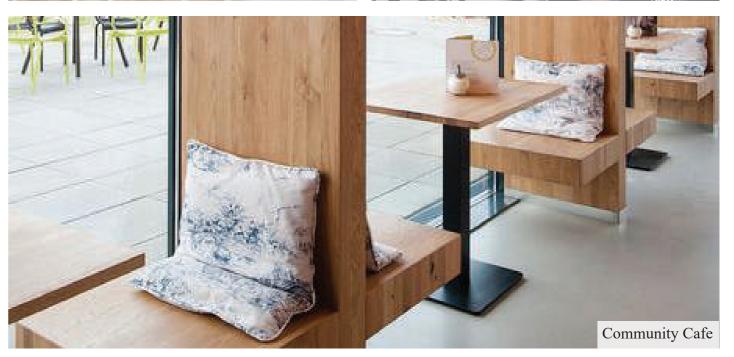
in order to deliver this project, further consultation with the community and key stakeholders is needed to assess the feasibility and support for such an initiative. Furthermore, a detailed business case, design and feasibility study is required alongside statutory approvals and necessary funding if required.

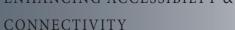












Safety and connectivity are crucially important for community mobility, therefore a project which strengthens the key linkages within the village will improve levels of community safety

D | UNLOCKING RECREATIONAL VALUE

A project to introduce a Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) for Ballyward. A potential location for this project could be at lands to the rear of the Parish Hall to compliment a future community HUB. The project will include the development of a multi-use games area to comprise high quality sports surfacing, perimeter fencing alongside adequate lighting and ancillary facilities.

The issue within the village is due to the lack and absence of play facilities within Ballyward, as such this project will dramatically increase the value of play within the village whilst safeguarding use for future generations. This project will substantially benefit the social development of the village by providing a high quality space recreational space within the village.

in order to deliver this project, further consultation with the community and key stakeholders is needed to assess the feasibility and support for such an initiative. Furthermore, a detailed business case, design and feasibility study is required alongside statutory approvals and necessary funding if required.















E | COMMUNITY HUB

A project to develop a future community HUB within the village to provide a designated facility for residents and groups to use. A potential location for this project is on lands to the rear of the Parish Hall which in turn will build a relationship with project D.

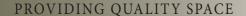
The development of a purpose built unit to cater for community needs and activities which provides the village with a shared, diverse and much needed space. There is no dedicated community space within the village with the Ballyward Church Hall offering an alternative building. As the community and village develop, the need for such a project becomes more evident. The benefits of delivering a dedicated community facility within the village offers the potential for the village to socially development. Furthermore, the community HUB may act as a future focal point within the village in guiding future development in the settlement.

in order to deliver this project, further consultation with the community and key stakeholders is needed to assess the feasibility and support for such an initiative. Furthermore, a detailed business case, design and feasibility study is required alongside statutory approvals and necessary funding if required.









An initiative which aims to enhance, improve and benefit the community by providing a project to harnesses the vibrancy and activity of the village.



A6 IMPLEMENTATION

This plan is designed to improve the social and economic fabric of the area. The Village Renewal Plan provides an indication of the key tasks which need to be undertaken to progress specific projects. This often includes detailed scheme design, preparation of the business case and funding application, and in some cases further feasibility and analysis.

The source of funding will often dictate the order in which tasks need to be undertaken, for example the Rural Development Programme expects all statutory consents to be place before the funding application is submitted. There are potential sources of funding available for the projects and initiatives set out within this Village Renewal Plan. It is important to note that reference to potential funding is a guidance only. Other funding opportunities may become available during the lifetime of this plan, and all projects will be subject to appropriate eligibility checks, application and assessment procedures as set by each funding body.

The draft Acton Plan (Secton 08) provides an indication of the priority level of each project based on discussions with key stakeholders during plan preparation. Alongside this, a lead delivery agent and key stakeholders have also been noted. There may also be other interested groups who should be engaged during project implementation or those whose agreement must be sought, such as a private landowners or statutory bodies. It is also important to recognise that priorities may change as funding opportunities become available.

























A7 ACTION PLAN

	Regeneration Initiative	Priority Level H- High M-Medium L- Low	Timeframe for Delivery Short (0-3 years) Medium (3-9 years) Long (9+ years)	Lead Delivery Agent	Stakeholders	Potential Funding Source
A	Gateway Improvements	Н	S	NMDDC	Com, NMDDC, TNI, DfI	RDP, BIG, TNI, DfI
В	Enhanced Street Lighting	M	S	TNI	Com, NMDDC, TNI, DfI, PSNI	TNI, NMDDC, DfI
С	Old Station Greenway HUB	L	M-L	DfI	Com, Sustrans, NMDDC, Dfl, TNI, PLO	DfI, RDP, NMDDC, BIG
D	Unlocking Recreational Value	Н	S-M	NMDDC	Com, NMDDC, DfC	RDP, BIG, NMDDC, Fundraising
E	Community HUB	M	S-M	Com	NMDDC, Com	BIG, HLF, NMDDC, Fundraising, RDP
F	Improved Footpaths	M	S	TNI	Com, NMDDC, TNI, DfI	RDP, TNI, DfI, NMDDC
G	Townland Stone Feature	Н	S	Com	Com, NMDDC	RDP, BIG, HLF, Fundraising, NMDDC
Н	Uplighting Church Grounds	L	S	Com	Com, NMDDC	Fundraising, RDP, BIG
I	Environmental Improvement Scheme	M	M	NMDDC	Com, NMDDC, TNI, DfI	NMDDC, RDP, BIG, HLF
J	Walking Trail	M	S-M	Com	Com, NMDDC, PLO	RDP, BIG, Fundraising, NMDDC

Com Community Groups

DfI Department for Infrastructure

DAERA Department for Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs

NMDDC Newry, Mourne and Down District Council
NIHE Northern Ireland Housing Executive

PLO Private Landowners

TNI Transport NI

CDRCN Co. Down Rural Community Network
PSNI Police Service Northern Ireland
RDP Rural Development Programme



B1 | Context

Dechomet

Village Location

The settlement of Dechomet (referred to as Dechomet) comprise a small village and parish community situated 1.4 miles North of Moneyslane and 6.4 Miles South of Dromara in rural Co. Down. The settlement rests upon the junction of Rathfriland, Moneyslane, Closkelt and Ballymackilreiny Roads and provides strong linkages with nearby rural settlements.

Village Character

The village and townland offer a traditional rural experience enriched by the Church which dominates and commands the centre of the settlement at the crossroads. Furthermore, a significant asset in the form Turley's Bar and Lounge rests upon the same junction, consolidating the village core. Additionally, the primary school offers a strong sense of character within the village and is situated at the edge of the village core along Closkelt Road. The settlement rests within the steeply rolling landscape and drumlin hills of Slieve Croob offering a truly unique and picturesque rural setting.



History and Development of the Village

The historical development of Dechomet mirrors a similar form and layout noticeable today. The crossroad junction offered a strategic advantage for the settlement as it benefitted greatly by passing lines of trade and communication. By 1832, the settlement had firmly established its place at the crossroads with the Roman Catholic Church over-arching the junction and commanding its presence. Furthermore, during this time the village comprised a small school which rested within the shadow of the Church along with a graveyard to the south of the settlement and a number of ancient forts surrounding the village. By 1862, the village had consolidated its layout at the crossroads by a small scale development enclosing the north eastern face of the crossroad. Moving forward, by 1907 the village had further consolidated its form around the crossroads with the St. Marys RC Church and Deehommed National School firmly established. By 1956, the settlement had developed a Flax mill to the South of the Village along Church Hill (Currently Moneyslane Road) which utilised the river to power its industrial requirements. By 1986, the primary school had relocated away from the village crossroads to reside along the Closkelt Road. As mentioned, the village resembles an identical physical layout and form due the low activity of development and growth throughout its history. Building on this, the village offers a historically distilled setting within a truly mystical landscape within the rolling hills of Slieve Croob.

Village Profile

Resting within the Ballyward ward, Dechomet comprises a predominately youthful population with 25.28% of residents under 16 years of age, whilst 12.03% of residents are aged 65+. Having established this, in relation to the general level of health within the area, 16.15% of people stated that their health was impacted via a long term health problem which impacted upon their daily activities whereas 84.24% stated that their health was either good or very good. Furthermore, a remaining 11.96% of residents had stated that they received unpaid paid care via close relative, friend or neighbours. Building on this, future development of services and amenities must meet the needs of each demographic sector to secure a bright, prosperous and sustainable future.

Settlement Development Limit

The settlement development limit has been designated to take account of land with extant planning permission for housing and sites that have not yet been approved but are at a stage in the planning process where there is reasonable expectation that approval will be granted.

The settlement development limit is designated to provide development opportunities in line with the scale, character and role of this attractive rural settlement while preventing encroachment into the surrounding countryside, as the location of the settlement lies within the designated area of outstanding natural Beauty (AONB)



















Recent and Future Development

This section highlights recent and any future planning applications within the village to provide an understand as to the development climate for the area.

Sports / Football Playing field: LA07/2015/1163/F Status: Permission Granted

Stephen's Green Playing field at lands North of Dechomet Primary

Historical Chimney Restoration. Planning Ref. Q/2014/0449/F Status: Permission Granted

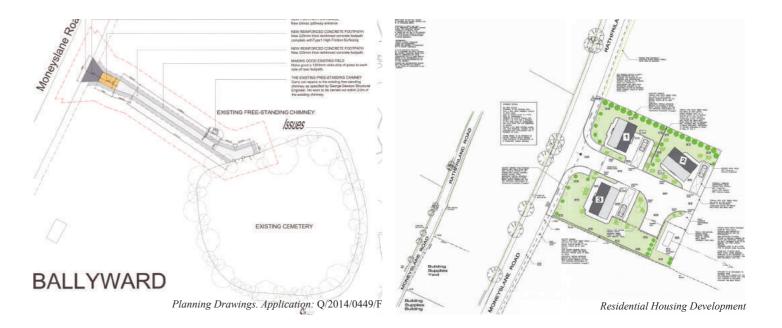
Repairs to an existing free-standing chimney and a new concrete access footpath to the existing Dechomet cemetery west of Moneyslane Road.

Private Residential Development. Planning Ref. LA07/2016/0749/F Status: Granted

Housing development consisting of 3 dwellings at land on Rathfriland Road 100m North East of 46 Moneyslane Road.

Due to the remote rural location of the village, it is clear that development pressure is minimal and primarily consists of extensions and alteration to private residential dwellings throughout the community and bespoke development to both the primary school and previous mill chimney. The community within Derryboye express a unique and remote setting and it is clear that development patterns reflect that landscape accordingly.





The development above highlights the type of development primarily found within the settlment. Patterns of development reflect the sensitive character, setting and sense of place.

B2 Policy Analysis

B2.1 Planning Policy

Regional Development Strategy 2035 'Building a Better Future'

The Regional Development Strategy (RDS) is a statutory plan, and sets the spatial vision for the region up to the year 2035. One of the central aims of the RDS id to support our towns, villages and rural communities to maximise their potential.

Our rural areas including our towns and villages have a key role in supporting economic growth. They offer opportunities in terms of their potential for growth in new sectors, the provision of rural recreation and tourism, their attractiveness as places to invest, live and work, and their role as a reservoir of natural resources and highly valued landscapes (RDS, p19)

The RDS sets out Strategic Guidance for the economic, society and the environment. RG7 highlights the need to support rural renaissance which is about revitalising the centres of small towns and villages so that they meet the immediate needs of the communities they serve.

The RDS emphasises the need to sustain rural communities living in smaller settlements and the open countryside and to improve accessibility for rural communities.

Strategic Planning Policy Statement (SPPS) 'Shaping a Better future'

The SPPS covers the whole of Northern Ireland and sets out the strategic policies for the sustainable development of the region, which it defines as "meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs".

The policy objectives for development in the countryside are to:

- manage growth to achieve appropriate and sustainable patterns of development which supports a vibrant rural community;
- conserve the landscape and natural resources of the rural area and to protect it from excessive, inappropriate or obtrusive development and from the actual or potential effects of pollution;
- facilitate development which contributes to a sustainable rural economy; and
- promote high standards in the design, siting and landscaping of development.

Banbridge / Newry and Mourne Area Plan 2015 (BNMAP)

The Banbridge / Newry and Mourne Area Plan was published in 2015 and sets a number of site specific statutory policies relevant to Kilmore village that should be taken into consideration by developers, landowners, the Council and the local community in the forward planning of the villages. BNMAP identifies a Local Landscape Policy Area for the settlement located to protect, preserve and enahche the environment surrounding the stream and remaining structures of the old Flax Mill!

Living Well Together: Newry, Mourne and Down District Council's Community Plan (2016)

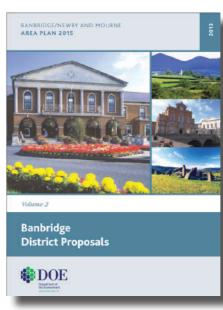
Community planning is a new function of Councils here in Northern Ireland since the reorganisation of local government in 2014. Councils have a requirement to create a Community Planning Partnership for their District whose role is to work in collaboration with all partners to achieve the aspirations of the Community Plan.

The overarching principles of the Plan are ensuring effective community engagement in the planning and delivery of services, utilising the strengths and resilience within communities, promoting equality and tackling inequality, adopting a preventative approach, driving efficiency and performance improvement, supporting a sustainable approach to development, holding each other as partners to account for delivering the community plan outcomes in collaboration and creating a Partnership Board responsible for monitoring and directing impact.

Emerging Local Development Plan

The Local Development Plan (LDP) will deliver a 15-year plan framework to support economic and social needs in the District, in line with regional strategies and policies, while providing the delivery of sustainable development. The new Local Development Plan will be the key consideration in the determination of planning applications for the development or use of land in the Council area. The next stage of the LDP process is the publication of the preferred options paper which will contain a series of options for dealing with key issues in the District, as well as the Council's justification for its proposed approach. The POP will indicate the Council's preferred options for growth and development in the District. The POP will be subject to public consultation. It is at this stage in the plan preparation process, that the public and stakeholders will have their first opportunity to put forward views and influence the LDP.







B2.2 Other Strategies, Plans and Initiatives

The Village Plan seeks to align with wider strategies and plans for the District, taking into account the importance of local assets of natural surrounding beauty in encouraging tourism and economic development into the area, and finding areas of complementarity where different stakeholders could work together to deliver shared ideas and projects. Below is a snapshot of the strategies and plans that have been taken into consideration in the development of the Village Plan.

NMDDC Corporate Plan 2015-2019

The Newry Mourne and Down District Council Corporate Plan for 2015-2019 aims to envisage a new era for the District. The plan strives to strike a balance between the ambitions of the district whilst taking account of key issues which can influence the future of the district area and its population. Additionally, the corporate plan aims to create opportunities for local people and local communities to thrive by supporting sustainable economic growth over time and helping them to lead fulfilling lifestyles. The visionary stance of the strategy aims to create a district that is that is attractive to visit and do business, where people and communities can unlock their enterprising spirit as well as play their part in contributing to its social and economic development along with a district that facilitates and encourages healthy lifestyles. By 2019, the corporate plan will aspire to create a premier tourism destination for the island of Ireland, attract investment and support the creation of new jobs and support the improved health and well-being of its people.

Economic Regeneration & Investment Strategy 2015-2020

The Strategy aims to develop the Newry, Mourne and Down region to be recognised as a vibrant, dynamic and connected region of enterprise and economic growth; a place of sustainable natural beauty and a premier tourist destination encompassing excellence in culture and arts and enabling and creating opportunities for all. The Strategy is developed around five themes: 1.) Economic Development, 2.) Tourism Development, Marketing, Promotion and Events, 3.) Urban Development and Regeneration, 4.) Rural Development and Regeneration, 5.) Arts, Culture and Heritage. The strategy aims to develop a synergy between the five themes that need to be developed in the period to 2020. Within each theme we have a number of strategic priorities which will be delivered against.

Newry, Mourne and Down District Council Tourism Strategy 2017-2022

The Tourism Strategy for Newry, Mourne and Down aims to maximise tourism growth for the district area by adopting a new and fresh approach that recognises the distinctive elements and strengths which sets the district apart to other destinations. The Tourism Strategy focuses on a key thematic headline 'Mountains, Myths and Maritime' which outline the core elements that shape a distinctive and strong image for Newry, Mourne and Down.

Newry, Mourne and Down District Council Sports Facility Strategy (October 2016)

The purpose of the Strategy is to identify the strategic need for Sports facilities in Newry, Mourne and Down District Council. This is one of 11 Local Strategies to be developed in the context of the NI-wide work.

The Strategy rationale is to develop a framework for the future prioritisation and development of sports facilities, based on identified need, increasing participation, addressing health inequalities and other local specific factors. The focus of the facilities analysis has been sports halls of 3 courts or above (except those on education sites), pools of 20 m and above, health and fitness suites of 20 stations and above and full size artificial grass pitches (AGPs), together with other facilities specific to each local area.

Newry, Mourne and Down District Council Play Strategy 2017-2022

The purpose of the Newry, Mourne and Down District Council Play Strategy is to establish an effective strategic framework for decision making as it relates to the development, maintenance and roll-out of play opportunities (both fixed and non-fixed) across the district.

At the core of the strategy is a recognition that play is a natural, fundamental part of children and young people"s lives that supports growth and development, enhances health and well-being, supports social and intellectual development, and enables children and young people to develop essential life skills. Importantly for children, play is fun.

Department for Infrastructure Strategic Plan for Greenways (July 2016)

In July 2016, The Department for Infrastructure published its Strategic Plan for Greenways which seeks to fulfil a commitment in the Bicycle Strategy (2015) in order to explore the possibility for the development of greenways throughout the region. It sets out a high level plan for the overall region to enable people to connect to places locally, regionally and nationally by active forms of travel. In relation to Dechomet, the area will substantially benefit via the future implementation of the Banbridge to Newcastle Greenway which runs through settlement.





















B3 Consultation Process

The Dechomet Village Plan has been developed in collaboration with the local community. Key aspects of the process are outlined below.

Village walkabout

A community walkabout took place on 23rd May 2017 with representatives of the Council, the consultant team, and the local community. During this time a site survey was carried out to understand the background and context of the Village, key assets, issues and potential ideas for how the Village could be improved.

Community Event

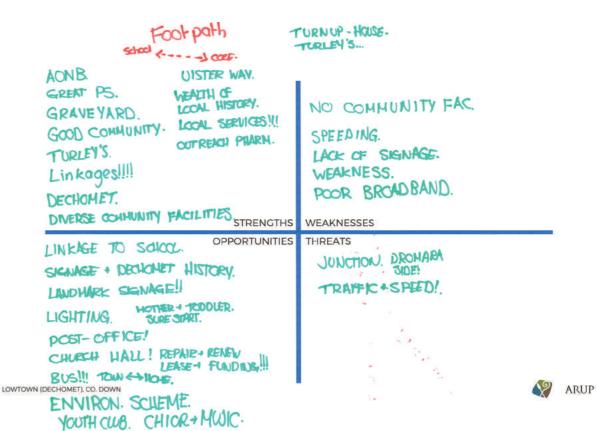
A public consultation event was held on the evening of 26th September in Turely's Bar and Lounge, Dechomet. The purpose of the event was to present the findings of the desktop research, site walkabout and roundtable workshop, together with draft proposals for actions and priorities for tackling the issues identified by the local community and village analysis work.

The event was publicly advertised via the Council's website and social media. Council officers also distributed details of the event to community and voluntary groups in the area, and a public advertisement was placed in the newspaper.

This draft Village Plan was then prepared and published for public consultation in January 2018.



Consultation Venue - Turley's Bar





B4 Site Analysis



Strengths

- · AONB Dechomet rests within the Mourne Mountain Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- · Primary School Successful and thriving primary school
- Church Grounds Offer a distinctive character to the village.
- Close-Knit Community Strong sense of community spirt within Dechomet.
- Local History A rich cultural character via surrounding landmarks and archaeological sites.
- Cycling Due to the challenging drumlin landscape / topography.
- Connectivity Dechomet is extremely well-connected to its surrounding villages and neighbouring settlements.
- Turley's Bar / Lounge The village offers a high quality commercial / leisure space



Weaknesses

- · No community facility No dedicated community space within the village
- · Speeding Speeding is deemed a serious issue within Dechomet.
- Signage Poor provision, quality and standard of adequate signage within Dechomet.
- · Poor Broadband Poor broadband performance and connectivity within the village area



- Linkage with Primary School an opportunity to strengthen the walkable / pedestrian connection
- Signage & Wayfinding an opportunity to install / develop signage which enhanced the gateway sites,
- Lighting New lighting would safeguard village safety and improve the overall appearnace of area.
- Church Hall The church grounds could hold the potential to offer a designated community space
- Post Office Installation of a service such as a post office would benefit the settlement greatly.
- EIS A high quality Environmental improvement scheme to improved the visual appearance of Dechomet.



- · Road Safety Will remain a key issues if not addressed
- Funding Potential lack of future finding for particular projects
- · Collaboration Lack in integrated community working could reduce village development progress

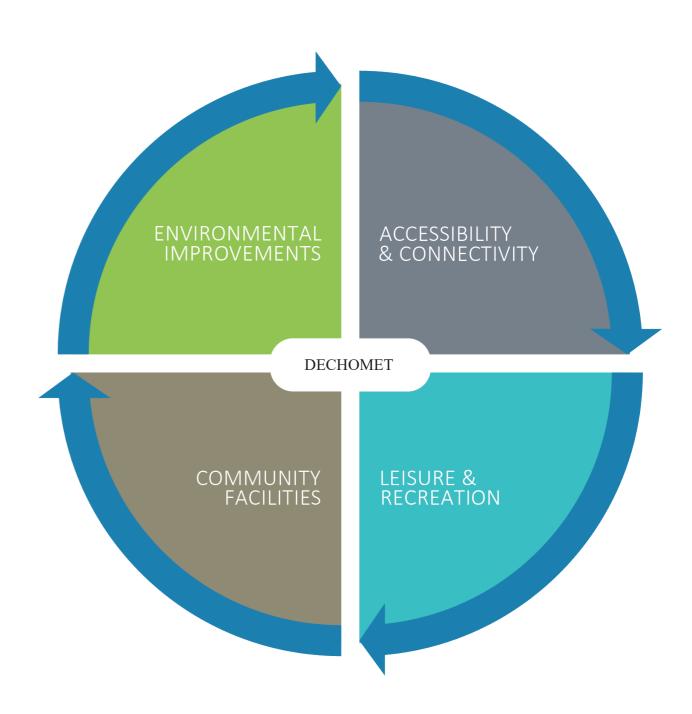


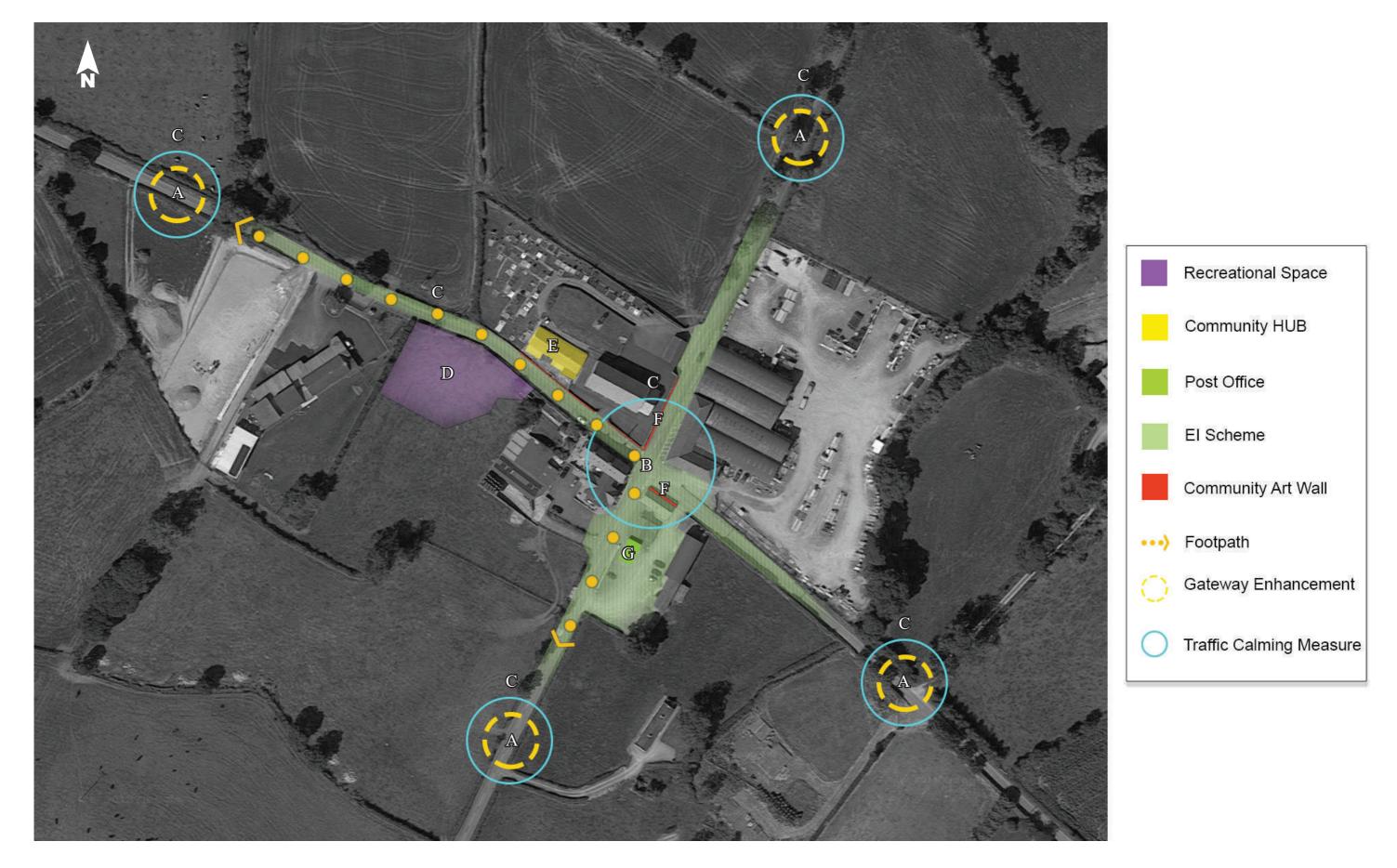
B5 Opportunities

Following consultation with the community of Dechomet (Dechomet) various projects have been identified which could contribute to the social and physical renewal of the village. The projects outlined in this draft plan are aspirations which are achievable with the relevant support. Constraints will face all the projects identified such as land ownership, funding and the requirement for statutory consents. However, such constraints can be addressed and overcome through dedicated and ongoing work by the community and other key stakeholders.

The opportunities presented in this plan range from community space to an enhanced village core and the improvement of village gateways. One of the key projects identified aims to address the lack of a community facility in Dechomet by providing a pre-fabricated structure or the reuse of an existing unit which could be utilised for multiple community uses. A further opportunity which would be of substantial benefit to the community is to enhance and revitalise the environmental quality of the village core. The village of Dechomet comprises a historically distinctive crossroad layout which plays a focal role in the environmental appearance of the village, a project to uplift this space would highly benefit the visual aesthetic of the settlement. Additionally, an opportunity to improve the environmental quality of the village gateways will help revitalise the visual character of Dechomet.

Please note that all illustrations within this plan are conceptual. Any improvements to Dechomet will require the development of detailed designs through consultation with local businesses and residents.





06 Opportunities

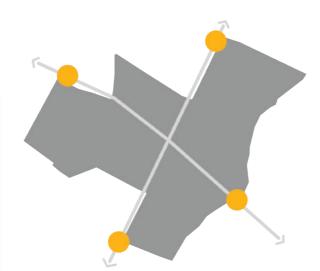
A | GATEWAY IMPROVEMENTS

A project to revitalise the key gateway sites within the village to improve the visual quality of Dechomet upon entry. The village comprises four gateway sites, two primary gateways situated at the Rathfriland and Moneyslane Road and two secondary gateways found at the Closkelt and Ballymackilreiny Roads which offer primary access into the village.

The project will include the environmental improvement of current gateway sites through high quality hard and soft landscaping, boundary treatment landmark features and improved signage. By implementing such measures in a holistic manner, the gateway sites of Dechomet will dramatically enhance the entrance points of the area providing an uplifting and renewed character to the village. As the primary gateways harness greater significance, they will require greater investment in relation to their role within the village.

The current condition of the village gateways are in need of urgent attention in order to revitalise the character of the community and settlement. The project has the potential to address this issue within the village and so help the village fulfil maximal potential of Dechomet.

To deliver this project, further consultation with the community and key stakeholders is needed to assess the feasibility and support for such an initiative. Furthermore, a detailed business case, design and feasibility study is required alongside statutory approvals and necessary funding if required.







ENHANCING GATEWAY QUALITY

The quality of the physical environment plays a crucial role in the expression of character and place. A project which aims to enhance the standard of the village at key entry points will revitalise the fabric and apperance of the settlement.



B | ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENT SCHEME

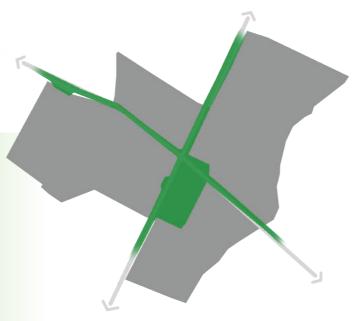
A project to enhance and revive the physical quality of the village core by a comprehensive environmental improvement scheme. The project will aim to strengthen the visual and environmental condition of the village core through enhanced street lighting, floral planting, landscaping and improved signage. The project will aim to uplift the visual appearance of the village to further express the rich character of both the settlement and the community. The physical environment of the village is tired and dated and requires urgent attention to visual uplift its appearance.

in order to deliver this project, further consultation with the community and key stakeholders is needed to assess the feasibility and support for such an initiative. Furthermore, a detailed business case, design and feasibility study is required alongside statutory approvals and necessary funding if required.



ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENTS

High quality environmental improvements play an important role in creating an improved and safe environment. Both pedestrians and road users are provided with a sense of security and safety.







Floral Planting



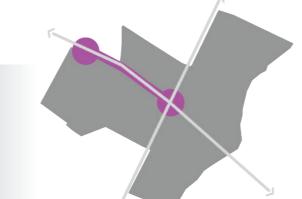
C | TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT AND LINKAGE WITH SCHOOL

A project to implement traffic calming initiatives within the village to help reduce and manage the impact of traffic flow. The natural layout and form of the village facilitates high volumes of traffic particularly along the Rathfriland and Moneyslane Roads.

The project aims to reduce the impact of speeding traffic within Dechomet by deploying traffic management initiatives at key sites within the village. Improved speed signage at the key gateway sites will help visually alert drivers upon entry to the settlement. Additionally, speed restricting surfaces such as rumble strips or dragon's teeth will help reduce speeds upon entry to Dechomet. Within the village core, a speed table may have the potential to slow traffic entering the crossroad junction, with additional junction mirrors in place, safety within the village core will be increased.

Traffic management initiatives are required at the primary school to safeguard levels of road and pedestrian safety. A safe crossing at the school will improve levels of access and connectivity to and from the school. Additionally, the project will aim to explore the potential for a footpath to be implemented between the village core and primary school to help connect the school with the bus stop. The need for such a project is evident due to the issue of road safety within the village. This project has the potential to manage the issue whilst improving levels of access and connectivity particular between the school and the village core.

To deliver this project, further consultation with the community and key stakeholders is needed to assess the feasibility and support for such an initiative. Furthermore, a detailed business case, design and feasibility study is required alongside statutory approvals and necessary funding if required.



ENHANCING ACCESSIBILTY & CONNECTIVITY

Safety and connectivity are crucially important for community mobility, therefore a project which strengthens the key linkages within the village will improve levels of community safety







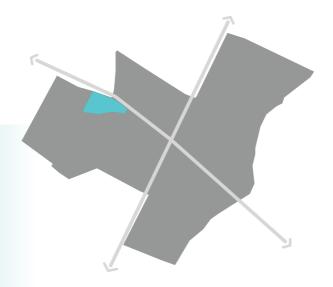


D | RECREATIONAL SPACE

A project to deliver improved recreational space for Dechomet. A potential location for this project could be integrate facilities into lands immediately east and contiguous to the St. Marys Primary School. The project will include the development of a innovative recreational space to comprise enhanced provision and access to play for younger generations within the community in order to support and develop the already existing play areas within the primary school.

The issue within the village is due to the lack and absence of play facilities within Dechomet, as such this project utilise the sloping topography of the land to unlock the value of play within the village whilst safeguarding use for future generations. This project will substantially benefit the social development of the village by providing a high quality space recreational space within the village.

in order to deliver this project, further consultation with the community and key stakeholders is needed to assess the feasibility and support for such an initiative. Furthermore, a detailed business case, design and feasibility study is required alongside statutory approvals and necessary funding if required.









CREATING RECREATIONAL VALUE

Enhancing recreational value within the village to provide all residents and visitors with the opportunity to experience a unique space for play and recreation.

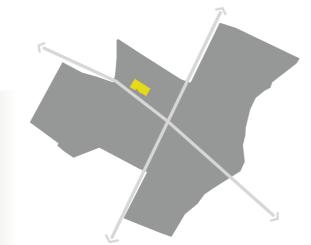


E | COMMUNITY HUB

A project to explore the potential for a future community HUB within the village to provide a designated facility for residents and groups to use. A potential location for this project is reuse the current church hall within the heart of the village by repairing, renewing, leasing and funding a project to provide a designated space for community groups and activities.

The project could include the development of a purpose built unit to cater for community needs and activities which provides the village with a shared, diverse and much needed space. The renovation and enhancement of the current church hall would be the most ideal option. There is no dedicated community space within the village however Turley's Bar and Lounge offer an alternative option. As the community and village develop, the need for such a project becomes more evident. The benefits of delivering a dedicated community facility within the village offers the potential for the village to socially development. The community HUB may act as a future focal point within the village in guiding future development in the settlement.

To deliver this project, further consultation with the community and key stakeholders is needed to assess the feasibility and support for such an initiative. Furthermore, a detailed business case, design and feasibility study is required alongside statutory approvals and necessary funding if required.









UNLOCKING COMMUNITY SERVICES

An innitiative to revive and ignite a key asset within the village to serve and the improved capacity to harness community activity.



B6 IMPLEMENTATION

This plan is designed to improve the social and economic fabric of the area. The Village Renewal Plan provides an indication of the key tasks which need to be undertaken to progress specific projects. This often includes detailed scheme design, preparation of the business case and funding application, and in some cases further feasibility and analysis.

The source of funding will often dictate the order in which tasks need to be undertaken, for example the Rural Development Programme expects all statutory consents to be place before the funding application is submitted. There are potential sources of funding available for the projects and initiatives set out within this Village Renewal Plan. It is important to note that reference to potential funding is a guidance only. Other funding opportunities may become available during the lifetime of this plan, and all projects will be subject to appropriate eligibility checks, application and assessment procedures as set by each funding body.

The draft Acton Plan (Secton 08) provides an indication of the priority level of each project based on discussions with key stakeholders during plan preparation. Alongside this, a lead delivery agent and key stakeholders have also been noted. There may also be other interested groups who should be engaged during project implementation or those whose agreement must be sought, such as a private landowners or statutory bodies. It is also important to recognise that priorities may change as funding opportunities become available.

























B7 ACTION PLAN

	Regeneration Initiative	Priority Level H- High M-Medium L- Low	Timeframe for Delivery Short (0-3 years) Medium (3-9 years) Long (9+ years)	Stakeholders	Potential Funding Source
A	Gateway Enhancements	Н	S	NMDDC, Com, TNI, DfI	TNI, NMDDC, RDP, BIG
В	Environmental Improvement Scheme	M	S-M	Com, NMDDC, TNI, DfI	NMDDC, RDP, BIG
С	Traffic Management and Linkage with Primary School	Н	S-M	TNI, Com, NMDDC, PS	NMDDC, RDP, TNI, DfI
D	Recreational Space	Н	S-M	NMDDC, Com, Priv	NMDDC, RDP, BIG, Fundraising
E	Community HUB	Н	S	Com, NMDDC, Priv	Fundraising, RDP, HLF, BIG
F	Community Art Wall	L	S	Com, NMDDC, TNI	AC, NMDDC, RDP, BIG, HLF
G	Post Office	L	M	Com, NMDDC, Priv	RDP, BIG, Fundraising

Com Community Groups

Department for Infrastructure DfI

Department for Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs DAERA

NMDDC Newry, Mourne and Down District Council NIHE Northern Ireland Housing Executive

RDP Rural Development Programme

BIG Lottery Funding Heritage Lottery Funding BIG HLF

ACArts Council

Priv Private Landowners

TNI Transport NI

Co. Down Rural Community Network CDRCN Police Service Northern Ireland **PSNI**

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