

Hilltown

Village Renewal and Development Plan

Addendum and Updated Action Plan: January 2018

The Village Renewal and Development Plan review 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.



1. Introduction

The Village Renewal and Development Plan (Village Plan) was produced for Hilltown in 2012. This has now been reviewed and updated by the community in conjunction with Newry, Mourne and Down District Council. The review has taken the form of an addendum to the Village Plan and should be read in conjunction with it. The addendum includes an updated Action Plan (see Section 2), which identifies which projects and initiatives have been implemented since the original plan was published and highlights projects which could be focused on over the next phase of implementation.

Ove Arup and Partners (Arup) was appointed as the consultancy team to facilitate the review and update of the Action Plan. This update has been facilitated by a stakeholder workshop. The outcome of this is an updated Action Plan which includes a range of projects and initiatives that we believe will have a real impact on the area.

The review of the Village 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 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.

2. Implementation

This plan is designed to improve the social and economic fabric of the area.

The Updated Action 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 for 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 Updated Action Plan also 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.

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 the Council's new Local Development Plan for the District, which is currently under preparation.



3. Hilltown- Review of 2012 Action Plan

		2012 Action Plan						2018 Update			
	Action substantially complete										
	Ongoing										
	Major constraint to implementation										
	New Project										
Regeneration Initiative		Key Stakeholders	Priority	Time frame	Potential Funders	Actions	Progress @ Jan. 2018	Priority H, M, L	Time frame	Actions	
1. Community Facilities											
1	Restore former COI	HCG, COI, Co Down RCN	H	S/M	RDP, Lot, NIEA	Design development work is under way for refurbishment of building. Economic appraisal will be required on the project prior to funding applications.	No further progress on restoration of building. Continue to progress plans to open up COI building for community use.	H	S/M	Investigate feasibility of opening up hall to community: options, coffee shops, heritage centre, arts & craft exhibition area.	
2	Potential new hall	HCG, Co Down RCN	M	M	RDP, Lot	Consult with Church on current status of plans to develop a new hall. Achieve all necessary consents.	Planning Application is underway to extend hall	M	M	2012 Action remain relevant	

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	3	New Sports Centre at GAA Premises	GAA	H	S	Sport NI	To develop a multi-use, purpose build sports building for GAA and community use Options for usage include gym, sports hall, handball court, studio classes To consider provision of a community / GAA managed play area, and walking track as part of this development				
2. Infrastructure and Services											
	4	Traffic calming measures, signage and gateways	TNI, NMDDC	H	S/M	TNI, RDP	Review of feasibility of traffic calming measures. Consultation with Transport NI, road improvement works. Feasibility study, design work, statutory approvals, installation of gateway signage and artwork.	Pelican Crossing now in place at Rathisland Road. Other measures in place via speed warning signs at school, however a need exists for further interventions	H	M	Lobby for improved traffic calming measures throughout Village. Priority areas to be addressed include, primary school, Rathfriland road junction, and crossing point on Castlewellan Road
	5	Street lighting	TNI, HCG, NMDDC	H	S	TNI	Consult Transport NI on health and safety concerns and potential to introduce new street lighting.	No Progress to date however remains a key priority to be addressed throughout Hilltown.	H	M	Lobby for improved lighting throughout village centre, Lobby for street lighting to key walking points, i.e. Slievenagarragh on the Yellow Road

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6		Crossing point (Castlewellan Road)	TNI, HCG, NMDDC, Co Down RCN	H	S	TNI	Consult with Transport NI on new crossing point to highlight health and safety concerns.	No Progress to date	H	M	Remains a key concern and high priority within Plan, with particular reference to health and safety concerns for school traffic Also link with action 5 as Cross Point at the location would supplement a Public walkway linking the village with the GAA ground
3. Tourism, Leisure and Recreation											
7		Blueway / Riverside walking route	TNI, RDP, NMDDC, Co Down RCN	M	M	RDP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop route in more detail addressing land ownership issues. Develop design to achieve necessary consent. 	No Progress has been achieved against this action, however it remains a priority for the community A Flood Risk assessment on the proposal did not recommend completion of the path in the location that was being considered	H	S	To re-visit plans to create a public walkway from Hen Mountain to Eightmile Bridge Community to work with Rights of Way officer to review progressing this action and seeking alternative more feasible walking routes Engagement with Private landowners will be required
8		New MUGA and landscaped Green Space in Spelga Park	HCG, NMDDC, Co Down RCN	M	M	RDP, SNI, Lottery	To investigate feasibility of developing land in village for community use To seek community consensus on potential uses: Games area, open natural play space, landscaped seating area etc.				

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9	Refurbish Handball Court	HCG, PRIV	M	M	SNI	Appraise costs necessary to refurbish court prior to researching funding opportunities	No Progress to date against action	M	M	Action remains an aspiration of the community and remains in Plan as a medium term priority	
10	Play park provision	HCG, GAA, Co Down RCN	H	S/M	RDP	New Play Provision: Research availability of land. Consult with Planning Service on any restrictions on land. Prepare costings on equipment required. Consult with Newry, Mourne and Down District Council on potential to upgrade existing play park and availability of future funding.	No progress to date however community survey has indicated a strong need for play area development			Consider potential of new play park located centrally within the village, delivered through a community led / managed project Liaise with Council regarding development of existing Council provided Play Area facilities	
11	Clonduff Rights of Way	HCG, NMDDC, DfI	H	M	DfI, RDP, NMDDC, Sport NI, Lottery	Community, and Council to work in partnership to secure Rights of Way trails around Clonduff. Landowner agreements, access, maintenance and feasibility of securing ROW agreements and opening up routes to be considered Finance and Statutory approvals to be secured					
12	Creation of a safe walking route around village, building upon some of the current walking routes	HCG, NMDDC, DfI, Co Down RCN	H	S	DfI, RDP, NMDDC, Sport NI, Lottery	Create a safe and lit walking route around the village. This could be created in junction with Rights of Way Pathways, linking the Village with the GAA facility or other attractions on the outskirts of the village. Need to consider feasibility of route, in light of private landowner involvement					
13	Visitor Facilities	HCG, NMDDC, Tourism NI	H	M	Tourism NI, RDP,	Enhance Visitor facilities at car parks for Hen Mountain, Leitrim Lodge, Yellow Water and Lyndsey's view point on the Yellow Road					
4. Environmental Improvements											

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	14	New Bridge and river enhancements	HCG, RA, Co Down RCN	M	M	RDP	Consult with Rivers Agency on potential for new crossing point	No Progress to date however remains a high priority project for community – establishment of a new footbridge over river or alternatively improvement works to existing bridge Enhancement works to river side embankments	H	S	Consult with River Agency regarding potential for works Consult with Council Rights of Way Officer to open up and develop the walking trail
	15	Development of opportunity sites and improvements to derelict buildings	HCG, PRIV, NMDDC	H/M	M/L	PRIV	Market conditions will dictate development of sites.	No Progress to date however a number of development sites have been identified as opportunity for redevelopment, or at the minimum addressing the appearance of dereliction to improve visual aesthetics.	H	S	Consider the potential redevelopment of the below sites: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bann Vale House The Lodge Investigate feasible alternative uses for the buildings In the short term to improve the visual appearance of the buildings
	16	Pathway Improvements / Environmental Improvement Scheme	HCG, NMDDC, DfI	H	S	DfI, RDP, NMDDC	Environmental Improvement scheme that will take in all pathways, lighting, gateways, landscaping A dedicate scheme that will improve all public pathways. Particular reference to high priority areas include: foot path on Castlewellan road at the bridge, footpath to Mallon's Corner, Footpath to Sandbank Road, footpath to Clonduff road junction on Castlewellan road, footpath to Mill Road on Rathfriland Road, and Footpath to Dana Place on Rostrevor Road				
	17	Shop Front Improvement Scheme	HCG, NMDDC, DfI	H	S	DfI, RDP, NMDDC	Work with local businesses to deliver a shop front improvement scheme				

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18		Gateways	HCG, NMDDC, DfI	H	S	DfI, RDP, NMDDC	To create Gateways to Hilltown on all 5 approach roads to the Village												
19		Minor EI Works: Landscaping / Flower Scheme, litter bins	HCG, NMDDC, DfI	H	S	DfI, RDP, NMDDC	To investigate the potential for a community led floral scheme throughout Village centre To deliver a landscaping scheme to replace old planting and to improve visual appearance of area Upgrade / more provision for litter and an awareness scheme among businesses / residents New Bus shelters												
20		Parking / Car parks	HCG, NMDDC, DfI	H	M	DfI, RDP, NMDDC	Consider the feasibility of an operating a park and ride facility for commuters, in order to relieve all day car parking in village. Land to be identified for scheme. Lobby DfI for a parking bay to be provided for buses and delivery vehicles Consider feasibility to open up delicate space or buildings to create additional car parking												
21		Public Toilets	HCG, NMDDC, DfI	H	S	DfI, RDP, NMDDC	Lobby Council for upgrade works to public toilets, including a notice on opening times for the facility												
22		Dog fouling	HCG, NMDDC	H	S	BIG, NMDDC, Live Here Love Here	Deliver an awareness campaign to help alleviate dog fouling issue												
Stakeholders and Potential Funders		AC Arts Council	Tourism NI – Tourism NI	NMDDC - Newry, Mourne and Down District Council	Priv Private Sector	DCAL Department for Culture, Arts and Leisure	Lot Lottery Funding	PSNI Police Service of Northern Ireland	SHSCT Southern Health and Social Care Trust	RDP Rural Development Programme	SELB Southern Education and Library Board	NIEA Northern Ireland Environment Agency	SNI Sport Northern Ireland	NIHE Northern Ireland Housing Executive	DfI Department for Infrastructure	Street Lighting	RA Rivers Agency	NIE Northern Ireland Electricity	HCA Hilltown Community Association

