

Bessbrook & Camlough

Village Renewal and Development Plan

Addendum and Updated Action Plan: December 2017

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 Bessbrook and Camlough 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 in 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. Bessbrook - Review of 2012 Action Plan

		2012 Action Plan					2017 Update			
	Action substantially complete									
	Ongoing									
	Major constraint to implementation									
	New Project									
Regeneration Initiative		Key Stakeholders	Priority	Time frame	Potential Funders	Actions	Progress @ December 2017	Priority H, M, L	Time frame	Actions
1. Community and Youth Facilities										
1.1	Interpretative / Information Centre	BCA, BHG, NMDDC, AC, NIEA, Priv, TourismNI	L	S	NMDDC, HLF, RDP, TourismNI, AHF	<p>Feasibility study. The renewal plan shows the community's preferred location for the interpretative / information centre.</p> <p>If this is not feasible, NIEA have suggested that BHG and BDC undertake an audit of all the vacant listed buildings in the village with a view to identifying alternative buildings that could be acquired, repaired and used for this purpose.</p> <p>In addition, a strategy could then be developed to bring some other buildings back into use. In relation to listed buildings NIEA have advised that they would be willing to discuss possible projects to address dereliction.</p>	<p>Preferred site location is no longer possible. Building has been bought and now functions as a Chapel of Rest. Potential alternative locations at the old tram station and old school building.</p> <p>Ring of Gullion Landscape Partnership Scheme have carried out a built / industrial heritage survey which may be useful to project.</p> <p>Bessbrook Development Co. have purchased a site to the rear of the Tirzah and are exploring funding avenues to support project delivery.</p>	H	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage with landowners to agree suitable site. Conduct feasibility study Secure appropriate statutory consents Identify and secure funding Explore old tram station as interpretive / information centre.

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1.2	Review play provision in Bessbrook	BCA, NMDDC, SNI	H	S	NMDDC, HLF, RDP, TourismNI	Feasibility study, design works, statutory approvals, construction.	<p>Opportunity to integrate a walking trail into the project (see Action 1.7).</p> <p>Play Area development within Bessbrook has been highlighted by Council in the 2017 Play Development Strategy. Council will undertake community consultation in relation to play development in Bessbrook, and the preferred location for same.</p>	H	S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore options to integrate adult fitness equipment into iconic play area plans. Community consultation on location of new play area. Community consultation on design, siting and provision. 	
1.3	Accommodation provision within village.	BDC, BCA, TourismNI, Priv	M	S	NMDDC, TourismNI, RDP	Bessbrook Development Company own property which could be converted to provide visitor accommodation.	<p>Four new units developed with Potential for further tourist accommodation.</p> <p>Developments required to restore vacant buildings (Post office/former temperance hall & old tram station).</p> <p>Units have been unsuccessful in attracting investment and are rapidly deteriorating.</p>	L	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to explore opportunities for further accommodation. Explore measures to ensure protection of vacant buildings to reduce physical deterioration. 	
1.4	Gateway Artwork & Signage Strategy.	BCA, NMDDC, Priv, TNI, AC	L	S	NMDDC, RDP, AC	Feasibility study, design work, statutory approvals, installation of gateway signage and artwork.	<p>New signs installed.</p> <p>Flax Flower public Art piece located in Bessbrook pond</p>	n/a	n/a	No further action required	

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	1.5	Encourage the local community to take a lead in the stewardship of important heritage protection in Bessbrook.	NMDDC, Ring of Gullion Landscape Partnership Initiative SGBPT, FoD, BHG	H	M	HLF, NMDDC, RDP, AHF, NIEA BH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify protected buildings, sites, monuments, routes etc.; Initiate an awareness building campaign; Monitor new proposals for development on or near important features / buildings; Promote reuse/restoration of heritage identified at risk; Make representations to the Council where breaches and/or erosion of heritage is identified. Build upon strong heritage qualities of surrounding area to encourage a rejuvenated and reinvented economic base for Bessbrook. 			
	1.6	New walking trail at Bessbrook Park and / or along Bessbrook Tram line	BCA, NMDDC, SNI,	H	S	NMDDC, HLF, RDP, TourismNI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Design walkway in partnership with the community, statutory approvals, secure funding, construction. 			
	1.7	Carrickcruppen GAA – develop club as Community Hub	GAC, Armagh GAA, Ulster GAA, Central GAA	H	S	Sport NI, RDP, NMDDC, HLF, PIV	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop the Club as a hub for the community via provision of play area, community gym, walking trail, 3G facility, and community building Undertake feasibility study, design and costing Secure statutory approvals, and funding for implementation 			
	1.8	To address anti-social behaviour in Bessbrook	CA, PCSP, Priv, NMDDC	H	S	PIV, NMDDC	<p>Anti-social behaviour (ASB) continues to be a problem. As well as the parks, derelict historic buildings are being damaged by vandalism. Need for more neighbourhood police and establishment of a neighbourhood watch programme as immediate response to the problem.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishment of a neighbourhood watch programme. Continue to monitor ASB in the village Request landowners of vacant sites to secure their premises. Conduct an audit of vacant and derelict properties in the village and encourage their restoration. Engagement with the Council on options for improving play facilities. Consider appropriate site for provision of a Play Area which would service the Camlough / Bessbrook community 			
2. Environmental Improvements										

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2.1	Improvements to 'Kick About' Area.	BCA, NMDDC, SNI	M	S	NMDDC, SNI	Design and improvement works	Complete - MUGA in place	n/a	n/a	No further action required.	
2.2	Bessbrook R.C. Church - E.I. scheme to church grounds to include path resurfacing	BRC	L	S	RDP	Design and installation of new surfacing.	Ongoing. A Restoration Committee is in place and a 4 year fund raising strategy is underway. Currently raising funds for internal repair works.	H	M	Delivery of internal and external improvement works.	
2.3	Bessbrook Old Mill site: Potential development site.	Priv	H	L	Priv, HLF	This site although in private ownership has been identified as being a key site in the regeneration of the village centre. The site is therefore viewed as a priority for redevelopment.	No progress to date. Community are keen that any redevelopment is in keeping with the character of the site and the conservation area.	M	M	Liaise with landowner about plans to redevelop the Mill Site. Explore potential to design a comprehensive site plan.	
2.4	Potential Development Site for Private / Civic Use.	PSNI, NMDDC, Priv	L	L	Priv	There are several sites that if appropriately redeveloped could significantly enhance the appearance of the village.	Ongoing	M	L	Engage with landowners about potential opportunity sites to inform new Local Development Plan. Attendance at local development plan consultation events. Make representations where appropriate to the local development plan.	
2.5	Redevelopment of 'The Branch' Building	Priv	L	L	Priv, NMDDC, HLF, RDP	Feasibility study, design works, statutory approvals, construction.	Ongoing	M	M	Project to remain in plan.	
2.6	Refurbishment of Harland Hall.	BDC, BHG	L	L	Priv, NMDDC, HLF, RDP	Feasibility study, design works, statutory approvals, refurbishment works.	Ongoing	M	M	Engage with landowners about progressing plans for refurbishment.	

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2.7	Village Townscape Strategy	BDC, BHG, NMDDC, PSNI, UAHS	H	S-L	RDP, NHL, BIG, NMDDC, Fund Raising	<p>Explore possibility of producing a village townscape strategy (<i>Village Design Statement</i>) to help guide the future development, environmental quality and restoration of the village.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek to engage with key stakeholders and wider community to assess feasibility and support for project. • Ensure promotion and encouragement of participation within project to help create the most ideal / reflective townscape guide possible. • The Village Design Statement will explore new townscape / streetscape to renewed and sensitive signage. • Develop a signage design guide to reflect the rich heritage of the village. • Colour scheme for historically significant buildings / sites. • Prioritise and encourage greater pedestrian focused public realm within the village. • Restructure parking. • Semi-mature trees in matching pairs. • Connectivity of laneways. • Softening of village streetscape. • Development of pond as wetland area 				
3. Tourism, Leisure and Recreation										
3.1	Synthetic Pitch – suitable for large ball sports e.g. football / rugby / GAA.	BSC, NMDDC, SNI	M	M	NMDDC, HLF, RDP, SNI,	Feasibility study, design work, statutory approvals, construction of synthetic pitch.	A MUGA has now been complete. A needs assessment would be required to determine need for any additional sporting facility, which could be undertaken as a community led initiative.	H	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct needs / feasibility study • If required, Detailed design and costs • Obtain appropriate statutory consent • Secure funding to deliver project
3.2	River walks between Bessbrook – Camlough and Bessbrook – Newry.	BCA, NMDDC, Priv, TNI, TourismNI, NT, NIEA, DFI, SNI, RoG LPS	H	S	NMDDC, HLF, RDP, TourismNI, SNI, HLF	Engage a consultant to undertake a feasibility study	<p>Ongoing - part of walkway already completed.</p> <p>A funding application has been submitted for completion of a river walk between Camlough and Bessbrook / Derrymore.</p>	H	S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to support implementation of a river walkway along the Bessbrook / Camlough River. • Seek to provide further protection for the disused railway

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							PPA negotiations underway with landowners. Concern by the local community that new housing developments are encroaching on the old tramway route which should be protected for future development as a walking route.			line through the emerging Local Development Plan process.
3.3	Regeneration of Park / Pond for recreational use.	BCA, NMDDC, TourismNI, NIEA, DFI, SNI	H	S	NMDDC, HLF, RDP, SNI, TourismNI	Feasibility study, design works, statutory approvals, improvement works.	Efforts to bring it back to beneficial use are ongoing. Potential issues with the pond being too deep for water activities. Littering is also a major problem.	H	S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carry out feasibility study into potential to bring Pond back into use for recreation and water based activities. Consider the development of a bio diversity project Lobby Council for better enforcement of littering in the area.
3.4	Increased Public Access to Derrymore House and Gardens and development of site for community recreational usage, including provision of a play area	BCA, TourismNI, NT, NIEA, BHG, Friends of Derrymore	M	S	NT, TourismNI, RDP	Meetings to be set up with key stakeholders and the National Trust to review the feasibility of increased public access	<p>Work is ongoing to develop Derrymore House and Demesne. 'Friends of Derrymore' formed to drive project forward.</p> <p>A major funding application has been developed that would undertake the following works: Trail development Provision of play facility Additional car parking,</p>	H	S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to progress this project in partnership with key stakeholders. Ensure adequate steps are taken to consider rich archaeological potential.

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							Site interpretation Other infrastructural works A full time ranger has also been appointed by National Trust			
3.5	Protection, development and promotion of public rights of way and public paths throughout the village.	NMDDC, FoD, CA, BHG, RoG LPS	H	S	HLF, NMDDC, RDP	Delivery of heritage trails project in partnership with Camlough community and voluntary groups. Continue to work with NMDDC on development of walking routes.				
3.6	Bessbrook Tramway Interpretation Project	BHG BDC NMDDC RoG LPS	H	S	HLF NMDDC	Bessbrook Development Company have acquired an old tramway that is currently being restored. A site needs to be identified and acquired on which the tramway can be centrally displayed within the village when full restored,				
3.7	Bessbrook Model Village Project	BHG BDC NMDDC RoG LPS	H	S	HLF NMDDC	Ring of Gullion Landscape Partnership Initiative have underway a Bessbrook Model Village Project which aims to engage and better interpret Bessbrook's heritage, by creating innovative interpretation, developing local skill and knowledge base. Recommendation from this project should be taken forward to preserve and promote the history of Bessbrook				
4. Infrastructure and Services										
4.1	Extension to paving and lighting scheme	NMDDC, PSNI, TNI, SELB, DfI	M	S	NMDDC, TNI, RDP	Design work, delivery of environmental improvement	Ongoing. Issues regarding parking around the school and traffic congestion.	L	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage with TNI on potential traffic mitigation and

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	from Church Road (Library) to Convent Hill (Police Station site).					scheme. Translink have advised that at present there are no plans to change bus stops soon. They will work with the community if changes are needed to fit into the proposed schemes. BT have advised that they do not have a budget for undergrounding aerial apparatus so such work would be at the cost of the project sponsors.	Undergrounding of BT cables has taken place.			extension of street lighting.
4.2	Lighting and Water Supply to the fountain.	NMDDC, BCA, BHG	M	S	Priv, NMDDC, RDP, AC	Feasibility study, design works, statutory approvals, improvement works.	Complete	n/a	n/a	No further action required.
4.3	Lowering pavement at mountain-side of village	TNI, NMDDC, ACDA	H	S/M	TNI, RDP	There is a need for blister paving to aid those with visual impairments - currently a health and safety issue. Engage with TNI to raise awareness.				

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	4.4 Identify opportunities to protect and enhance health services in the village and ensure services are accessible to older people.	NMDDC, BDG, CDRCN	M	M	NMDDC, SHSCT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct audit of current service provision for older people. • Identify gaps in provision and required services. • Seek funding to deliver enhanced programme of activities, and work with relevant statutory providers to deliver required services. • Explore potential for a permanent site for the GP. 				
Stakeholders and Funders										

4. Camlough – Review of 2012 Action Plan

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Ongoing										
Major constraint to implementation										
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Regeneration Initiative		Key Stakeholders	Priority	Time frame	Potential Funders	Actions	Progress @ December 2017	Priority H, M, L	Time frame	Actions
1. Community and Youth Facilities										
1.1	Potential Development Site – Purpose built Peace / Community Centre. (Camlough Community Association Project).	CCA, NMDDC, AH	H	M	HLF, RDP, Priv	Detailed Design, statutory approvals, construction.	Ongoing. Outline planning has been granted for a community centre (ref. LA07/2016/1591/O). Current proposals also include 3G Football pitch and includes provision for Boxing club. Funding currently being sought.	H	S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seek full planning permission. Secure funding. Delivery of project.
1.2	Camlough Rovers - extension to Clubhouse and new pitch.	CRM	M	M	CR, Priv, RDP	Feasibility study, design works, statutory approvals, construction.	New pitch with floodlights installed. Extension to clubhouse not achieved yet.	M	S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project remains an important project for the club. Explore funding to deliver scheme.
1.3	Improvements at Shane O’Neills GAC.	GAC, NMDDC, CCA	H	S	NMDDC, Sport NI, GAC	Explore ideas to encourage greater use of the club and make it more accessible for community events and activities.	Project Ongoing	H	S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project remains a high priority for the club.
1.4	Carrickcruppen GAA – develop club as community hub	GAC, Armagh GAA, Ulster GAA, Central GAA	H	S	Sport NI, RDP, NMDDC, HLF, Piv	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop the Club as a hub for the community via provision of play area, community gym, walking trail, 3G facility, and community building Undertake feasibility study, design and costing Secure statutory approvals, and funding for implementation 				
1.5	Play upgrade to Oliver Plunket park					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake community consultation regarding the design of the upgrade works Undertake design, costing and secure budget for implementation 				
1.6	Improvements at Camlough Rovers Football Club	CRFC, NMDDC	H	S	NMDDC, Sport NI, CRFC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Installation of new spectator stand at the grounds. Highway to Health / walkway around perimeter of Sports Pitch Feasibility, detailed design and costings. Secure statutory consents Identify and secure funding 				

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2. Environmental Improvements										
2.1	Introduction of Planters / Floral Displays.	NMDDC, CCA, Priv, TNI	M	S	NMDDC, HLF, RDP	Installation, Management and Maintenance.	A small EI scheme took place in 2013 / 2014 via RDP funding that installed some new benches, litter bins and landscaping works. Also, a small amount of planting has taken place in the century garden. Need to make sure all planting is coordinated between CCA and the Council.	M	S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Need for further enhancement works Consultation between local community and the Council before any new planting areas are developed to ensure coordinated approach.
2.2	Shop Frontage Improvement Scheme.	NMDDC, CCA, Priv	H	S	NMDDC, Priv, RDP, DFI	Consultation with landowners to undertake maintenance works.	A low level of improvement works is ongoing by private businesses	L	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Need for further enhancement works Continue to engage with local landowners to encourage them to keep their shop fronts in good condition.
2.3	Signage information board and restoration of Church of Ireland.	CCA, COI	M	L	Priv, RDP	Design works, statutory approvals, improvement works	Ongoing.	L	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commission detailed design. Secure appropriate statutory consents. Secure funding.
2.4	Gateway Artwork & Signage Strategy.	CCA, RoG Landscape Partnership Scheme NMDDC, Priv, TNI, AC	M	S	NMDDC, RDP, AC	Feasibility study, design works, statutory approvals, installation of gateway signage and artwork.	The RoG Landscape Partnership Scheme has completed public art / gateway pieces in some areas: Camlough, Bessbrook and Forkhill	M	S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carry out feasibility study. Apply for statutory consents. Engage with local community on design and siting of the gateway Explore options for signage to better

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										<p>connect Camlough centre with the lake, mountain and Slieve Gullion Forest Park.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secure necessary funding Install gateway signage and artwork
2.5	Encourage environmental stewardship among local community to improve the appearance of Camlough.	NMDDC, CCA	H	S	KNIB, RDP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore the potential for the village to take part in the 'Live here love here' campaign. Arrange community clean up event 				
2.5	Improved Connectivity between Camlough Village Centre and Church of Ireland	TNI, NMDDC, CCA	H	M	RDP, TNI, NMDDC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore options to improve footpaths connecting the centre of the village with the church of Ireland. Engage with key stakeholder and wider community Carry out design and feasibility study Seek statutory approvals Source and secure finding as necessary 				
3. Tourism, Leisure and Recreation										
3.1	Regeneration of Camlough Lough: Provision of Amenities.	NMDDC, CCA, NIEA, TourismNI, Priv	M	M	NMDDC, RDP	Feasibility study, design works, statutory approvals, improvement works.	<p>Camlough Reservoir Improvement Options Report published 2014. £3m approx investment for improvement works to the embankment took place (June 2017). Lough is well used for water sports and activities and still requires amenities to support and develop use of the Lough.</p>	H	S	<p>Continue to improve the leisure and recreational potential of Camlough Lough:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Showers & changing facilities Storage facilities Toilets Picnic benches and seating

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										<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Walking facilities (paths, signage, drinking water) - Fishing facilities - Car parking 	
3.2	Cycle Network	CCA, NMDDC, Sustrans, TNI	M	M	RDP, TNI, BIG, NMDDC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore options to improve develop cycle network connecting key assets throughout area (e.g. village to lake). • Engage with key stakeholder and wider community • Carry out design and feasibility study • Seek statutory approvals • Source and secure finding as necessary 					
3.3	Village Activity Map	CCA, NMDDC	H	S	RDP, HLF, Fund Raising	Explore options to design a village activity map highlighting key activities to do within the immediate and surrounding area.					
3.4	Creation of walking trails	CCA, NMDDC	M	S-L	RDP, HLF	Explore the opportunity to Creation of trails and opening up of Camlough Mountain as a recreation hub for the area – linking Newry, Bessbrook/ Derrymore House, Camlough Lake and Slieve Gullion Forest Park through cycle paths, Ring of Gullion Way, Cycle trails and open swimming.					
3.5	South Armagh Outdoor Recreation Strategy	NMDDC, CCA	M-H	S-M	RDP, BIG	Explore options to assist the Implementation of the South Armagh Outdoor Recreation Plan, Heritage Audit and the NMDDC Sports Facility Strategy to support Leisure, recreation and tourism within the village and surrounding rural area.					
4. Infrastructure and Services											
4.1	Car parking delineation along the Main Street.	TNI	M	S	TNI	<p>Consultation with TNI, road improvement works. Translink have advised that at present there are no plans to change bus stops in the near future. They will work with the community if changes are needed to fit into the proposed schemes.</p> <p>TNI have plans to resurface Camlough Main Street coming years' subject to</p>	Project Complete	n/a	n/a	No further action required.	

