Drumaness
Village Renewal Plan
Newry, Mourne and Down District Council
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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 Drumaness. 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.**
Village Location

Drumaness is approximately 3 miles south of Ballynahinch, resting along the main A24 Belfast to Newcastle road. The village offers effective connectivity and access with its immediate rural settlement network.

Village Character

Drumaness contains a finite array of services and shops and offers a variety of recreation opportunities within its development limit. Drumaness Primary School and the Church of Christ the King are located on the Drumsnade Road on the adjacent the Newcastle Road, approximately 0.5 miles south west of the settlement. The centre of the village attains a characteristic appearance with listed terraces of mill buildings, laneways, courtyards and a distinctive millpond. The Dan Rice Memorial Hall, now used as a designated community centre and is a historical listed building.
History and Development of the Village

Drumaness developed as a distinctive mill village in approximately 1850, with the establishment of a spinning mill along the banks of the River (River Cumber). The village ceased its employment offering in 1968 following the closing of the mill and today it is largely a commuter village with a local service role for smaller settlements within the immediate rural area. Today the village has developed significantly since the closure of the historic mills. Drumaness has experienced considerable growth over the past 20 years due to its strategic location and nature as a commuter settlement.

Village Profile

The village of Drumaness has a predominately youthful population with 23.86% of residents under 16 years of age, whilst only 10.99% of the population are over the age of 65. In relation to the general health status of the village and settlement the area comprises a predominately health community at 83.23% of people stated that their health was either good or very good whereas 18.29% of people stated that they had a long term health issues or disability that limited their daily activities. Building on this, it is vital that future development of services and amenities within the settlement take into consideration the needs of each demographic sector.

Steelment Development Limit

The designated Settlement boundary aims to protect and conserve the natural setting of the village and offers feasibility for expansion. The settlement is located in a distinctive drumlin landscape with a significantly elevated drumlin to the south west, which screens the settlement from the arterial Newcastle Road and creates an effective visual perimeter to further growth and development. Furthermore, the River plain, which is common to flooding, provides a natural limit to the east of the settlement. Additionally, the settlement limit includes existing residential areas and land currently utilised for industry and employment, open space, recreation and leisure.
**Future Development**

A key role of the Ards and Down Area Plan is to designate and zone land for future residential and housing development for the settlement. Building on this, the village of Drumaness has two key residential zonings at lands south east of Hillside via Old Park Road along with lands South of Cumber Road and Cumber Park. Having established this, the demand for residential development within the village has been realised with residential development schemes being implemented onto the designated sites.

Having established this, future housing growth within the settlement will be extremely limited under the current area plan, however with the emergence of the new local development plan, future demand for housing may be catered for.

**Recent Developments**

Sporting Facilities alongside ancillary storage

Indoor sports hall and store at 91 Old Park Road. Planning Ref. R/2014/0645/F Status: Permission Granted.

Residential Development

Change of use from shop to 2 apartments, using existing parking at 158 Crawfordsburn Road. Planning Ref. LA07/2016/0111/F Status: Permission Granted.

Residential Development

4 Semi-detached dwellings and garages at lands adjacent and North East of 19 Cumber Grange. Planning Ref. LA07/2016/0111/F Status: Permission Granted.
3.1 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 is 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.

Ards and Down Area Plan 2015 (ADAP 2015)


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.

ADAP identifies two committed housing zonings at Lands South East of Hillside and Lands South of Cumber Road. Furthermore, the area plan comprises three Local Landscape Policy Areas alongside areas of designated Open Space.

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.
3.2 Other Strategies, Plans and Initiatives

This plan seeks to align with wider strategies and plans for the District, taking into account the importance of the Mourne Mountains in encouraging tourism and economic development into the area, and finding areas of complementarity where different stakeholders could work together to deliver such shared ideas and projects. Below is a snapshot of the strategies and plans that have been taken into consideration in the development of the Ballyholland 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 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 provide a framework for the future prioritisation, development and provision of sports facilities at a local level, to meet identified community need. The plan strategy identifies the need for improved sporting facilities within Drumaness by upgrading the status of the Drumaness soccer pitch to “Good” quality condition.

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

The play strategy for NMDDC identifies need for new or upgraded play facilities in the district. Within the village, the play park scored 83 in relation to its play value. Building on this, a sufficient population and household base/distribution to retain the play area. Given the low play value it is recommended that the play area be upgraded/enhanced to increase play value rating. Additionally, indicative costs for this upgrade ranges between £25,000 - £65,000 to be delivered within year 3 of the plan.
04 Consultation Process

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

**Village Walkabout**

A village walkabout took place on Thursday 25th May with representatives of the Council, the consultant team, and several key representatives from the local community. The intention of the site visit was 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 28th September in St. MacArtan’s Primary School. The purpose of the event was to present the findings of the desktop research, site walkabout, 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.
05 Site Analysis

**Strengths**
- Setting – a unique and picturesque rural landscape
- History – a rich industrial heritage associated with the mills
- Location – effective connectivity with immediate and wider rural area
- Community – a strong and close-knit community
- Sport – a strong sporting tradition within the settlement
- Community Hall – Dan Rice Hall is extremely well used
- Pond – A distinctive visual and environmental asset

**Weaknesses**
- Youth Facilities – lack of youth facilities within the community
- Sporting facilities – Lack of quality and diverse sporting amenities within the village
- Vacancy – considerable levels of vacant land and units within the village
- Visual Quality – Club boundary wall requires urgent visual attention
- Parking – an issue within the village centre

**Opportunities**
- Community Integration – opportunity to improve inter-community integration
- Vacant land – derelict cricket field offers development opportunity
- Diverse Sporting Provision – opportunity to explore a diverse range of sporting clubs for the community e.g. snooker club
- Sporting HUB – Opportunity to explore the potential for a Sporting HUB
- Industrial Units – Opportunity for business units at Old Mill site.
- River – River tidy-up and improved access for public
- Pond – Opportunity to develop and maintain for community and leisure use
- Play / Recreation Space – Opportunity to improve recreational provision with Drumaness

**Threats**
- Funding – potential lack in future funding for certain projects
- Collaboration – potential lack in integrated community working
DRUMANESS Site Analysis

Settlement Boundary

Water Course

Primary Circulation Road

Secondary Circulation Road

Primary Gateway

Secondary Gateway

Village Core

Protected Route

Post Office

Bus Stop

Church

School

Shop

Football Pitches

G.A.C Pitches

Dan Rice Community Centre

Public Access

Play Park

Public Open Space

Scenic Views

Housing Policy Area

Local Nature Conservation Importance Site

Considered to be of greatest amenity value, landscape quality or local significance and must therefore be protected from undesirable or damaging development.
Following consultation with the community of Drumaness, 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 a sporting and heritage HUB to an enhanced River Trail and a project to enhance the environmental quality of the GAC boundary wall. One of the key projects identified aims to express and enhance the rich sporting and cultural heritage of Drumaness through a dedicated sporting and heritage HUB to offer diverse community, tourism and sporting services. A further opportunity which would be of substantial benefit to the community is to create a distinctive River Trail and community walkway to harness and express the rich character and setting within the village. Additionally, a project to improve the environmental condition of the area associated with the GAC boundary wall.

*Please note that all illustrations within this plan are conceptual. Any improvements to Drumaness will require the development of detailed designs through consultation with local businesses and residents.*
A project to revitalise the physical and visual condition of the gateway sites entering Drumaness to improve their environmental quality and standard. The village comprises four primary gateways, all of which rest upon the Crawfordsburn, Cumber, Drumaness and Old Park Roads. The project will include a combination of environmental improvements and improved traffic management initiatives to help revitalise the functionality and physical quality of gateways.

Environmental enhancement initiatives such as improved welcome signage, high quality landscaping, landmark features and floral planning have the opportunity up-light the entry points to the village whilst improved road safety signage, speed restrictive surfacing and calming initiatives will help to reduce the impact of traffic entering the village.

This project will have the potential to revitalise and improve the condition, quality and functionality of the village gateway site by enhancing their visual appearance and improving their ability to calming traffic upon entry.

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.
A project to improve the environmental and physical quality of the boundary wall surrounding the village GAC grounds. Located at the Old Park Road, the exiting boundary wall visually impacts its surrounding and immediate environment by visually degrading its immediate setting. The boundary wall to the sports club creates a visually displeasing and unattractive space within the village and requires urgent attention in order to revitalise and uplift the immediate area.

The project will transform this area into a distinctive space though high quality hard and soft landscaping, boundary treatment, improved lighting and public / community art installations. By visually transforming the condition of the boundary wall and its immediate space, will community will be able to reclaim ownership and pride for this area of Drumaness whilst also uplifting the physical quality of the successful sporting club within 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.

VIBRANT COMMUNITY ART

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.
C | WALKWAY CONNECTIVITY

A project to improve the connectivity between existing and future walking trails within Drumaness to enhance levels overall provision and access.

This project links with the potential delivery of the Riverside / pond walkway project to connect with the current and future walking trails associated with the Newcastle Road and Drumaness loop within the village to create a unified and connected village network. The project will provide a connection between the existing and pathways by creating designated linkages to better connect the unified network.

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.
A project to improve access to the Drumaness Lake / Pond by creating a distinctive walking trail throughout its immediate and adjacent area. The pond offers a unique and distinctive asset for the village within the core of the community. The project will explore the potential to develop a high quality pathway and walking trail to revitalise the leisure potential of the pond.

By improving the quality of lighting, landscaping, boundary treatment and flood alleviation the pond will have the potential to deliver a highly unique and attractive asset for Drumaness. The need to deliver a project similar to this is evident due to the untapped potential of the pond in conjunction with the opportunity to provide an improved and distinctive walking network for the community.

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 | SPORT AND HERITAGE HUB

A project to express and harness the rich sporting and historical character within the village by delivering a dedicated sporting and heritage HUB to act as a new community, leisure, educational and tourism HUB for the village.

The location of the project would require further consultation with the community, landowners and key stakeholders. The project could be implemented within the village core or integrated into current lands such as the cricket pitch or adjacent lands, or land immediately east of Green View. The project will include a purpose built community facility whilst also providing key support to sporting groups alongside tourism and educational facilities to express and harness the rich historical nature of Drumaness.

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.
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.
## Regeneration Initiative Priority Level Timeframe for Delivery Stakeholders Potential Funding Source

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<tr>
<th>Regeneration Initiative</th>
<th>Priority Level</th>
<th>Timeframe for Delivery</th>
<th>Stakeholders</th>
<th>Potential Funding Source</th>
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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  
RDP = Rural Development Programme  
BIG = BIG Lottery Funding  
HLF = Heritage Lottery Funding  
AC = Arts Council  
Priv = Private Landowners  
TNI = Transport NI  
CDRCN = Co. Down Rural Community Network  
PSNI = Police Service Northern Ireland  
SNI = Sport NI  
NIW = Northern Ireland Water  
NIEA = Northern Ireland Environment Agency  
HLF = Heritage Lottery Funding
This report takes into account the particular instructions and requirements of our client.

It is not intended for and should not be relied upon by any third party and no responsibility is undertaken to any third party.

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