

Hilltown Village Renewal and Development Plans

Final Report
September 2012



Prepared for



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Revision Schedule

Hilltown – Renewal and Development Plan September 2012

Rev	Date	Details	Prepared by	Reviewed by	Approved by
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1 Introduction

The Northern Ireland Rural Development Programme (NIRDP) 2007-2013 was launched to build capacity within local communities and provide support for community economic development in the most disadvantaged rural areas. The NIRDP is part financed by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) and is managed by the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development. A core principal of the approach to broader rural development in Northern Ireland has been and continues to be that the communities which most closely experience problems should be involved in the design and delivery of projects and programmes to tackle such problems and, thus, improve their quality of life.

The NIRDP contains a number of measures under each axis. These measures are specific areas where support is to be targeted. Each measure was selected from a menu of options provided by the European Union in order to target the aspects of rural life that are most important to Northern Ireland. Measure 3.5 targets Village Renewal and Development with the aim of "creating long term visions for villages and surrounding areas and to support initiatives promoting cross-community development".

The objective is to enable and encourage residents of villages and surrounding areas to create a vision and an integrated action plan to ensure the full potential of their area is achieved and also to support integrated village initiatives.

1.1 How is the Programme administered at a local level?

The Southern Organisation for Action in Rural areas (SOAR) is the Joint Committee and Local Action Group for the Craigavon, Armagh and Newry & Mourne Council areas. They are responsible for the administration of the NIRDP within the rural areas of Craigavon, Armagh and Newry. SOAR local action group is comprised of local Councillors and Social Partner Representatives. Craigavon Borough Council acts as the Lead Council with responsibility for all financial and administrative matters.

1.2 Village Renewal and Development

Newry and Mourne District Council secured funding under Measure 3.5 for the preparation of Village Renewal and Development Plans for 13 pre-selected villages and clusters across the Newry and Mourne District Council Area.

URS were commissioned by Newry and Mourne District Council to facilitate the development of these plans. The plans will be prepared between February and June 2012, with potentially a second stage which will involve selected projects being taken forward to the stage of submitting an outline planning application, making a submission for funding or being ready to feed into an economic appraisal.

1.3 Methodology

This Village Renewal and Development Plan has been developed by the community for the community. The methodology was strongly consultation based and allowed a range of stakeholders including NMDC, local Councillors, community and voluntary groups and the general public to get involved.



1.4 Policy Context

1.4.1 Regional Development Strategy 2035 'Building a Better Future'

The RDS provides an overarching strategic planning framework to facilitate and guide the public and private sectors. It does not redefine the other departments' strategies but complements them with a spatial perspective.

The RDS 2035 revises the original strategy published in 2001 and amended in 2008. The RDS influences various government strategy including the Programme

for Government (PfG) and the Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland (ISNI). The Strategy takes account of key driving forces such as population growth and movement, demographic change, the increasing number of households, transportation needs, climate change and the spatial implications of divisions that still exist in our society. The RDS is not operational planning policy which is issued through Planning Policy Statements (PPSs) published by the Department of the Environment (DOE).

The RDS has a statutory basis under the Strategic Planning (Northern Ireland) Order 1999, and the Order requires Departments to "have regard to the regional development strategy".

The Strategy has four key elements:

- A Spatial Development Strategy which divides the region into 5 components based on functions and geography;
- Guidance at two levels;
 1. Regional level that is to be applied to all parts of the region, and
 2. Specific guidance for each element of the Spatial Framework
- A Regionally Significant Economic Infrastructure section which identifies the need to consider strategic infrastructure projects;
- Implementation.

The aims of the RDS:

- Support strong, sustainable growth for the benefit of all parts of Northern Ireland;
- Strengthen Belfast as the regional economic driver and Londonderry as the principal city of the North West;
- Support our towns, villages and rural communities to maximise their potential;
- Promote development which improves the health and wellbeing of communities;
- Improve connectivity to enhance the movement of people, goods, energy and information between places;
- Protect and enhance the environment for its own sake;
- Take actions to reduce our carbon footprint and facilitate adaption to climate change; and
- Strengthen links between north and south, east and west, with Europe and the rest of the world.

Chapter 3 of the RDS sets out the strategic guidance for the region focusing on the key principles of the economy, society and the environment. The guidance is also split into Regional Guidance (RG) and Spatial Framework Guidance (SFG).

There is a dedicated section regarding Rural Northern Ireland and the key guidance is set out below:

SFG13: Sustain rural communities living in smaller settlements and the open countryside

- Establish the role of multi-functional town centres
- Connect rural and urban areas
- Revitalise small towns and villages
- Facilitate the development of rural industries, businesses and enterprises in appropriate locations
- Encourage sustainable and sensitive development

SFG14: Improve accessibility for rural communities

- Improve the overall connectivity of rural communities to services and other parts of the Region by exploring innovative ways of bringing these services to the communities
- Integrate local transport

1.4.2 Rural White Paper Action Plan (Draft)

The Rural White Paper Action Plan is an Executive initiative aimed at addressing key issues and challenges facing rural communities. The development of the Action Plan is being led by the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development.

Public consultation on the draft Action Plan commenced on 13 March 2011 and finished on 13 June 2011, with the final Rural White Paper Action Plan anticipated to be published in early 2012.

The draft Rural White Paper Action Plan has been developed following extensive consultation with the Rural White Paper Stakeholder Advisory Group.

The RWP has been developed to provide a strategic framework for rural policy for the next ten years and will help guide the work of the Executive in this significant and challenging area.

The RWP identifies the Rural Vision:

Our vision is of a fair and inclusive rural society where rural dwellers enjoy the same quality of life as all others in the region. We envisage **vibrant, strong rural communities**, resilient and receptive to global trends through **strong inter-linkages with urban areas** and market towns.

Our vision is for rural economies adapting to global trends and **improved infrastructure and transport systems** to ensure rural dwellers can avail of employment opportunities and **key services**.

Our vision is for rural areas that maintain their distinctive features as places of agricultural production, areas of outstanding beauty, places of social, historic and cultural uniqueness and places with a **strong community infrastructure** which can avail of **economic, social and cultural opportunities**.

Our vision is for the continuing development of **linkages between rural and urban** areas so that everyone can enjoy the beauty and uniqueness of rural places and the facilities and services of larger towns and cities.

Draft Rural White Paper, p5

In order to achieve the Vision the RWP identifies 5 key themes:

1. Urban / Rural Linkages
 - To support the development of an efficient transport and infrastructure system that facilitates effective rural – urban inter-linkages;
2. Access to Services
 - To promote fair and equitable access to key services for all rural dwellers;
3. Sustainable Rural Communities
 - To promote tolerance, health, well-being and inclusion for rural dwellers;
 - Seek to minimise, where it exists, disadvantage, poverty, social exclusion and inequality amongst those living in rural areas and in particularly amongst vulnerable groups;
 - To maintain a viable economic, social, cultural and physical infrastructure in rural areas and seek to ensure that regional infrastructure disparities are minimised;
 - To preserve the cultural and social uniqueness of rural community life linked to its smaller population settlement;
 - To promote the development of effective and inclusive rural governance structures and sufficient community capacity to engage in these structures;
 - To enhance and refine the Rural Development Programme to ensure the maximum benefit from future Programmes for rural communities;

4. Sustainable Rural Economies

- To provide rural businesses with appropriate support to ensure the development of dynamic and innovative rural economies;
- To seek to maximise employment opportunities for rural dwellers;

5. Sustainable Countryside

- To support the development of a more sustainable agricultural sector, a more competitive agri-food sector and enhanced agri-environmental links;
- To safeguard the beauty and fabric of our rural areas and increase opportunities for all to enjoy the benefits of the countryside.

The RWP goes on to set out a detailed Action Plan which is based on the 5 key themes set out above, consisting of some 90 specific actions.

1.4.3 Tackling Rural Poverty and Social Isolation Framework 2011-2015

This framework sets out the goals, objectives, priority action areas and outcomes for the Programme for Government commitment to bring forward a package of measures to tackle rural poverty and social isolation.

The framework aims to:

- Build on the work of the Rural Anti-Poverty / Social Inclusion Framework 2008-2011;
- Provide the necessary tools to identify the needs of vulnerable people / groups in rural areas;
- Develop programmes / interventions to help alleviate poverty / social isolation amongst vulnerable people / groups in rural areas;
- Complement and add value to existing government strategies aimed at tackling poverty and social isolation;
- Empower rural communities to help themselves.

Programmes Implemented through the 2008-2011 Framework

1. Childcare Programme
2. Assisted Rural Transport Scheme (ARTS)
3. Maximising Access to Services, Benefits and Grants

4. Rural Challenge Programme

5. Rural Support

6. Rural Fuel Poverty

7. Community Development

Action Plan 2011-2015

Project	Budget
Assisted Rural Travel Scheme (ARTS – DRD)	1,800,000
Maximising Access Rural Areas (MARA – DHSSPS / PHA)	2,589,800
Community Development	4,800,000
Health Checks (PHA / Health Trusts)	383,000
Rural Support	351,000
Rural Challenge (Small Grants)	1,000,000
Older Peoples Rural Project 9Health Trusts / DHSSPS)	878,000
Youth Employability Programme (Advantage / DEL)	203,000
Youth Enterprise Scheme – Northern Periphery Programme	181,000
Safe Drinking Water Scheme	33,500
Emerging Issues	2,230,700
Potential Post Office Diversification Scheme	TBA
Vulnerable Groups in Rural Society Research Programme	TBA
Capital projects	
Fuel Poverty	1,871,605
MARA	68,080
Health Checks (PHA / Health Trusts)	60,315
Total	16.45 M

1.4.4 Northern Ireland Rural Development Programme 2007-2013

The NI Rural Development Programme was approved by the European Commission in July 2007 and has three key elements:

Axis 1 – improving the competitiveness of the agricultural and forestry sectors by supporting restructuring, development and innovation. Key measures include vocational training, adding value to agricultural products and marketing, farm modernisation and improving the supply chain. The upskilling and reskilling opportunities in this axis are a means of targeting farmer's income and potential to be more competitive both within farming, or outside if that is more appropriate.

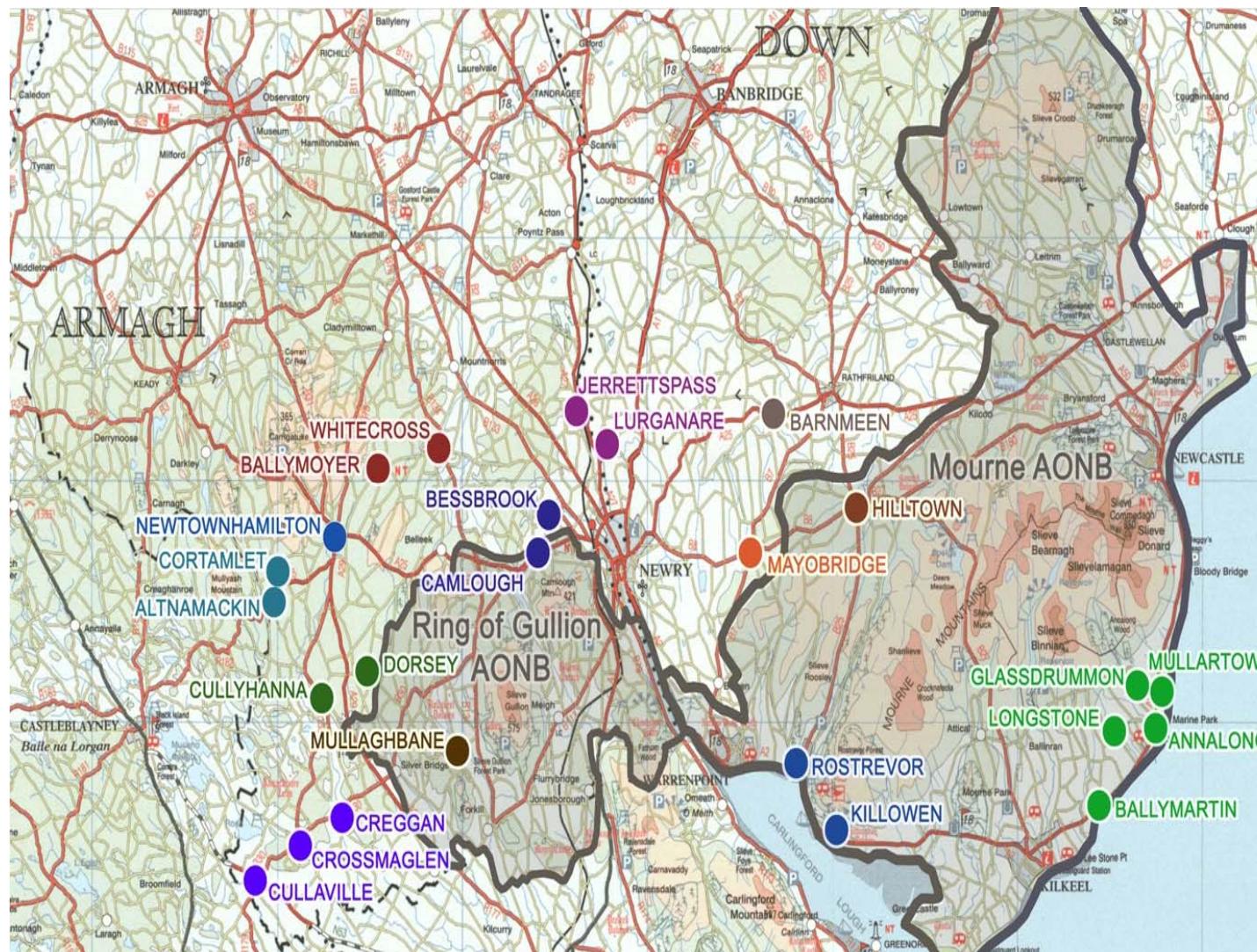
Axis 2 – improving the environment and countryside by supporting land management. Key measures include agri-environment programmes and less favoured area compensation schemes.

Axis 3 – improving the quality of life in rural areas and encouraging the diversification of economic activity. Key measures include business creation, farm diversification, encouragement of tourism activities, support for basic services for the rural economy, village renewal and conservation / upgrading of the rural heritage.

1.4.5 INTERREG IV Programme (Cross Border Rural Development)

The INTERREG IV Programme focuses on the strategic development of the North and border counties of the South. The funds are targeted towards those disadvantaged rural communities that are most in need of cross border support

2 Overview



There are a number of 'clustered' villages within the Newry and Mourne area. Hilltown has been selected as a standalone plan. There may be projects identified which create tourism benefits for neighbouring villages and the wider surrounding area.

3 Hilltown Plan

3.1 Town Profile

3.1.1 Background

Hilltown is situated within the town land of Carcullion, from the Irish *Carr Cuilinn*. Hilltown is the main village in the parish of Clonduff which had a population of 899 people in the 2001 census. It is located on the foothills of the Mourne Mountains 15 kilometres from Newry.

The whole of the settlement lies within the Mourne Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

Hilltown owes its origins to the Marquis of Downshire who in the 18th century built St. Johns Church of Ireland at the crossroads around which the historic core of the village developed. The village has recently expanded, with residential development spreading out along Newry Road, Main Street and Rostrevor Road. The cluster of development to the east of the river which comprises St. Johns RC Church, St. Patrick's primary school and a number of dwellings along Kilkeel Road, remains visually separate from the main village.

There are currently a range of services available within the village. This includes both retail and commercial facilities, such as supermarkets, public houses, a post office, a chemist and a livestock market. There are also a range of community facilities such as a primary school, churches, a community centre and a social club.

The Boley Fair which takes place in July is a major event in the Village calendar.

3.1.2 Demographics

Hilltown is classified as a small village or hamlet by the NI Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) (i.e. with population between 500 and 1,000 people). On Census day (29 April 2001) there were 899 people living in Hilltown. Of these: 27.0% were aged under 16 years and 14.4% were aged 60 and over

- 48.8% of the population were male and 51.2% were female

- 96.9% were from a Roman Catholic background and 2.8% were from a Protestant background
- 5.1% of people aged 16–74 were unemployed.

Percentage Comparisons (%)	SETTLEMENT	CLASSIFICATION BAND	N.IRELAND
	Hilltown	small village, hamlet and open countryside	N.I
Under 16 years of age	27.0	24.3	23.6
Over 60 years of age	14.4	17.0	17.6
Male	48.8	51.1	48.7
Female	51.2	48.9	51.3
Catholic (Community Background)	96.9	47.5	43.8
Protestant and Other Christian (including Christian related) (Community Background)	2.8	50.7	53.1
Born outside of NI	4.6	7.6	9.0
Ethnic group other than white	0.0	0.4	0.8
Persons with limiting long-term illness	20.7	18.2	20.4
Providing unpaid care	9.0	10.7	11.0
Owner-occupied households	70.0	82.4	69.6
Detached houses/bungalows	37.3	72.4	36.5
Access to a car or van	78.4	87.9	73.7
Degree level education or higher	12.7	14.5	15.8
No qualifications	47.6	43.2	41.6
Persons in employment who are female	45.3	41.3	45.0
Persons in employment who are male	54.0	58.7	55.0
Unemployed	5.1	3.3	4.1

Table 1: Comparison with Northern Ireland and similar sized settlements , Source, NISRA (2001 Census)

3.1.3 Planning Policy Context

The relevant planning policy for Hilltown is set out within the Draft Banbridge Newry and Mourne 2015 (August 2006). Hilltown is described as having a good range of services and community facilities available.

3.1.3.1 Settlement Development Limit

The settlement development limit takes account of the role of the settlement whilst protecting its natural setting as well as accounting for extant and current planning applications.

The designation of a settlement development limit around Hilltown enables the rationalisation and consolidation of existing development while aiding the reduction of urban expansion into the surrounding rural area and avoiding/reducing ribbon development along the main arterial routes into the village. This limit is also determined by a number of attractive local landscapes that have been designated as local landscape policy areas. In particular two settlement nodes have been identified in order to protect the setting of Hilltown Lodge and the river corridor

3.1.3.2 Housing

The Housing Needs Assessment identified a need for 8 dwellings in Hilltown. Site HN 12 – Ardmore rive was identified to meet this social Housing need.

The following sites, including committed sites, are zoned for housing.

- Zoning HN 02 Housing (Committed) North of Carquillan
- Zoning HN 03 Housing (Committed) South of Glenveagh
- Zoning HN 04 Housing (Committed) South of Castlewellan Road
- Zoning HN 05 Housing (Committed) South of Slievenagarragh
- Zoning HN 06 Housing (Committed) West of O'Hagans Terrace
- Zoning HN 07 Housing (Committed) Rear of Fegans Gardens/Kennedy Drive
- Zoning HN 09 Housing Rathfriland Road
- Zoning HN 10 Housing West of Glenveagh
- Zoning HN 11 Housing Yellow Road
- Zoning HN 12 Housing Ardmore Drive

3.1.3.3 Transportation

The B8 is a Protected Route. Policy for the control of access to this route is contained in Policy AMP 3 of PPS 3 - Access, Movement and Parking.

3.1.3.4 Environment and Conservation

Area of Townscape Character (ATC)

The following area is designated as an ATC. Policy for the control of development within ATCs is contained in the Addendum to PPS 6 – Area of Townscape Character.

Designation HN 13 Area of Townscape Character Hilltown

An ATC is designated as identified on Map No. 3/14 - Hilltown.

Key features of the area, which will be taken into account when assessing development proposals, are as follows:

- Hilltown owes its urban origin to the Marquis of Downshire, who built the Church of St. John (Col) in 1762 which dominates the centre of the village. The listed Church is located at the junction and gives rise to an urban space. Hilltown still retains this character with its core centred on the confluence of roads;
- The Main Street buildings are mainly two storey with slated roofs, painted smooth or roughcast dash finishes, plaster banding around windows, quoins, with some featuring bay and sliding sash windows;
- Listed Old Rectory at No. 51 Main Street with associated grounds and significant vegetation at the eastern end of the village centre;
- Other listed buildings in Hilltown include the restored Downshire Arms, the Presbyterian Church and Manse and Lowry's chemist. These buildings and the streetscape are a well-balanced mix of two storey residences and shops that combine to form a cohesive and satisfying whole.

3.1.3.5 Area of Archaeological Potential (AAP)

An AAP is defined in Hilltown as indicated on Map No. 3/14 - Hilltown. Policy for the protection of archaeological remains is contained in PPS 6 - Planning, Archaeology and the Built Heritage.

3.1.3.6 Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)

Part of Hilltown is located within the Mourne AONB as identified on Map No 3/14 - Hilltown. The AONB was designated in 1986 under the Nature Conservation and Amenity Lands Order (Northern Ireland) 1985 in recognition of its exceptional scenic quality.

3.1.4 Local Landscape Policy Areas (LLPAs)

The following areas are designated as LLPAs. Policy for the control of development within LLPAs is contained in [Policy CVN 4](#) in Volume 1 of the Plan.

Designation HN 14 Local Landscape Policy Area Rathfriland Road

A LLPA is designated as identified on Map No. 3/14 - Hilltown.

Those features or combination of features that contribute to the environmental quality, integrity or character of this LLPA are listed below:

- St. John's RC Church (listed) and associated grounds and vegetation;
- Stream corridor.

Designation HN 15 Local Landscape Policy Area Newry Road

A LLPA is designated as identified on Map No. 3/14 - Hilltown.

Those features or combination of features that contribute to the environmental quality, integrity or character of this LLPA are listed below:

- Stream corridor.

Designation HN 16 Local Landscape Policy Area Bann River Corridor

A LLPA is designated as identified on Map No. 3/14 - Hilltown.

Those features or combination of features that contribute to the environmental quality, integrity or character of this LLPA are listed below:

- St. John's RC Church (listed), parochial house and primary school;
- Views of St. John's RC Church;
- Hilltown Lodge, a derelict house (1785) is an important listed building. Any development should endeavour to enhance the existing dwelling;
- Bannvale House, a locally significant building;
- Old Mill buildings;
- River corridor;
- The Motte and associated landforms and vegetation.

3.2 Listed Buildings



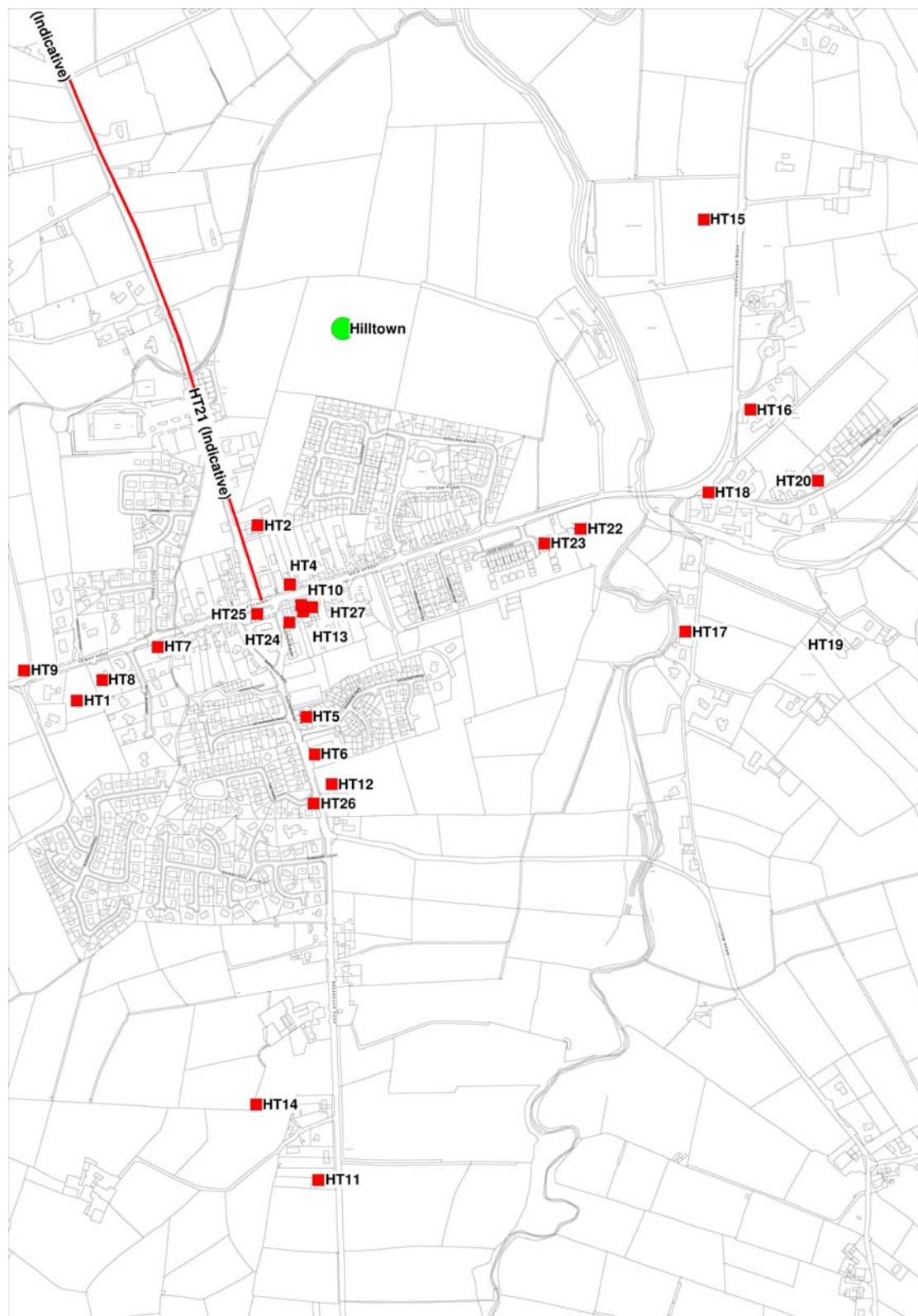
Listed buildings map, Hilltown

ID	HB Num	Council ID	Ward ID	Construction Date	Type	Address	Transferred	Second Survey	Original
5178	HB16/07/001	16	07	7	Church	St John's C of I Church Main Street Hilltown Newry Co Down BT34 5UH	True	B1	B
2799	HB16/07/002	16	07	10	Church	Hilltown Presbyterian Church Main Street Hilltown Newry Co Down BT34 5U	True	Record Only	B
3177	HB16/07/003	16	07	10	Rectories/Manses etc	Presbyterian Manse 16 Main Street Hilltown Newry Co Down BT34 5UH	True	Record Only	B2
5104	HB16/07/004 A	16	07	13	House	2 Rathfriland Road Hilltown Newry Co Down BT34 5UR	True	Record Only	B
1884	HB16/07/005 A	16	07	10	Hotel	Downshire Arms 28 Main Street Hilltown Newry Co Down BT34 5UJ	True	B2	B1
5150	HB16/07/005 B	16	07	10	Hotel	Former outbuildings at The Downshire Arms 28 Main Street Hilltown Newry Co Down BT34 5UJ	True	Record Only	B1
9152	HB16/07/009	16	07	10	House	47 Main Street Hilltown Newry Co Down BT34 5UJ	True	Record Only	B1
9153	HB16/07/010	16	07	7	House	51 Main Street Hilltown Newry Co Down BT34 5UJ	True	B2	B
9156	HB16/07/012	16	07		Bridge	Eight Mile Bridge Kilkeel Rd Hilltown Newry Co Down	True	B2	B2

Listed buildings

The table above illustrates the number of listed buildings within the Village of Hilltown. The map shows how the buildings are located in close proximity to each other in the centre of the Village. The Church of Ireland acts as the focal point within the Village.

3.3 Planning History



The map illustrates the number of live planning applications and approvals within Hilltown. The majority of approvals are located around the centre of the Village.

PLANNING HISTORY – HILLTOWN					
No.	Planning Application Code	Site Location	Proposed Development	Decision	Expiry Date
HT1	P/2005/2892/F	Newry Road, Hilltown (To rear of No. 2/4 Yellow Road).	Erection of Dwelling	PERMISSION HAS BEEN GRANTED	01/08/2012
HT2	P/2006/0171/F	9, 11 and 11a, Rathfriland Road, and land adjacent to and north of 9, 11 and 11a Rathfriland Road, Hilltown.	Demolition of 2 dwellings and office and erection of 6 no. detached dwellings and garages and associated roads layout	PERMISSION HAS BEEN GRANTED	28/07/2013
HT3	P/2008/0654/F	No. 9 Main Street, Hilltown, Co. Down.	Erection of replacement dwelling.	PERMISSION HAS BEEN GRANTED	15/09/2013
HT4	P/2007/1293/F	32-34 Main Street, Hilltown	Demolition of 2 No. existing dwellings & erection of 2 No. terraced houses & 1 No. detached house & garage	PERMISSION HAS BEEN GRANTED	10/10/2013
HT5	P/2007/1359/F	18 Rostrevor Road, Hilltown.	Development of 4 no. houses	PERMISSION HAS BEEN GRANTED	25/09/2014
HT6	P/2007/1520/F	Irish National Foresters Hall, Rostrevor Road, Hilltown.	Erection of front entrance porch and extension to side of building to accomodate side entrance lobby, Toilets, Dining area, and ancillary facilities.	PERMISSION HAS BEEN GRANTED	13/06/2013
HT7	P/2010/1379/F	2 Main Street Hilltown Newry BT34 5TG	Proposed sales/showroom extension to existing premises	PERMISSION HAS BEEN GRANTED	27/06/2016
HT8	P/2011/0697/O	4 Oakridge Villas Hilltown Newry Co. Down BT34 5TP	Site for Retirement Dwelling	PRE-DECISION STAGE - RESOLUTION OF OUTSTANDING ISSUES	Pending
HT9	P/2011/0832/O	Newry Road Hilltown Co Down (opposite junction of Newry Road and Yellow Road Hilltown).	Proposed Agri-centre consisting of Farm Produce Shop, Agricultural Supplies Unit, Veterinary Surgery, Garden Centre and Garden Allotments with associated car parking and ancillary accomodation.	CONSULTATIONS HAVE BEEN ISSUED	Pending
HT10	P/2006/1984/F	No.33 Main Street, Hilltown, Newry.	Extension to existing shop to provide additional sales area, toilet, food preparation area and staff room to ground floor, additional storage and relocation of existing apartment on first floor (reduced scheme)	PERMISSION HAS BEEN GRANTED	05/02/2015
HT11	P/2010/0466/F	Adjacent to and 40m North of no.1 Dana Place, Rostrevor Road, Carcullion, Hilltown BT34 5TZ	Replacement dwelling and detached garage	PERMISSION HAS BEEN GRANTED	12/10/2015
HT12	P/2009/1559/F	Site adjacent to 24 Rostrevor Road, Hilltown	Erection of 5 dwellings (4 No. semi-detached dwellings and 1 detached dwelling)	PERMISSION HAS BEEN GRANTED	05/01/2016
HT13	P/2008/0733/F	Lands to the rear of 33 Main Street, Hilltown, BT34 5UJ	Erection of dwelling and associated site works	PERMISSION HAS BEEN GRANTED	09/08/2015
HT14	P/2008/0881/F	150 metres south west of 39 Rostrevor Road, Hilltown	Erection of 15m 6kw wind turbine for domestic use	PERMISSION HAS BEEN GRANTED	05/09/2013
HT15	P/2008/1181/F	Clonduff GAC Playing Fields, Castlewellan Road, Ballymaghery, Hilltown, Newry.	Provision of additional new playing field with associated parking, relocation of existing access and site works all to serve existing sports ground plus floodlighting to new playing field	PERMISSION HAS BEEN GRANTED	10/03/2014

PLANNING HISTORY – HILLTOWN - CONTINUED

No.	Planning Application Code	Site Location	Proposed Development	Decision	Expiry Date
HT16	P/2007/1172/F	St.Patrick's Primary School, 13 Castlewellan Road, Hilltown, Newry	Erection of replacement temporary Classroom	PERMISSION HAS BEEN GRANTED	23/11/2012
HT17	P/2011/0218/F	Adjacent to and north of no 10 Leitrim Road Hilltown Newry BT34 5XS	Erection of one and a half storey dwelling with detached domestic garage	PERMISSION HAS BEEN GRANTED	08/05/2017
HT18	P/2010/0553/F	Junction Castlewellan Road and Kilkeel Road outside no 9 Castlewellan Road, Hilltown.	Erection of new street cabinet to facilitate provision of new fibre optic infrastructure across the BT network.	PERMISSION HAS BEEN GRANTED	02/07/2015
HT19	P/2008/1293/F	14 Leitrim Road, Hilltown, BT34 5XS	Erection of replacement dwelling and garage	PERMISSION HAS BEEN GRANTED	10/02/2014
HT20	P/2006/0717/F	Gilmores Garage, Lands at No. 6 Kilkeel Road, Adjacent to No. 1 Kilkeel Road Hilltown Co. Down BT34 5XY	Erection of Residential Development Comprising of 6 Dwellings	CONSULTATIONS HAVE BEEN ISSUED	Pending
HT21	P/2009/1112/F	Hilltown to Rathfriland to include townlands of Lisnsmulligan, Carcullion.	Erection of 11 kv overhead line and alterations to existing lines.	PERMISSION HAS BEEN GRANTED	29/10/2014
HT22	P/2006/0313/F	Lands at Hilltown Lodge, 3 Castlewellan Road, Hilltown.	Extension and Restoration of Existing dwelling and Construction of Housing Development and associate...	PLANNING APPEAL - APPEAL UPHELD (PERMISSION GRANTED BY PAC)	Not Given
HT23	P/2004/2812/O	Hilltown Lodge, 3 Castlewellan Road, Hilltown. (including lands east of Kennedy Drive and opposite 12-16 Mournview and entrance to Spelga Park)	Site for Housing Development including conversion of Hilltown Lodge (Listed Building) to apartments.	PLANNING APPEAL - APPEAL UPHELD (PERMISSION GRANTED BY PAC)	Not Given
HT24	P/2011/0234/F	To rear of public toilets & immediately south of no4 Rostrevor Road Hilltown Co Down	To provide storage facility to serve off-licence	PERMISSION HAS BEEN GRANTED	19/11/2016
HT25	P/2010/0841/F	The Square, Rostrevor, Hilltown, Rathfriland outside church	Erection of new cabinet to facilitate provision of new fibre optic infrastructure across the BT network. cabin dimensions approx 1600mm high, 1200mm wide, 450mm deep	PERMISSION HAS BEEN GRANTED	23/09/2015
HT26	P/2010/0564/F	Junction Rostrevor Road facing Foresters Hall Hilltown Rathfriland	Erection of new street cabinet to facilitate provision of new fibre optic infrastructure across the BT network. Cabinet dimensions approx 1600mm high 1200mm wide 450mm deep	PERMISSION HAS BEEN GRANTED	17/06/2015
HT27	P/2008/0793/F	35 - 37 Main Street, Hilltown, Co. Down.	Retention of access and parking as constructed, relocation of pedestrian access ramps from front of building to rear and retention of dormer windows	PERMISSION HAS BEEN GRANTED	27/10/2013

3.4 Consultation Process

Stage	Consultation Method	Date	Venue	Attendance / Responses
	Stakeholder Forum meeting	Thursday 8 th March 2012	Carcullion House (7.30pm-9.30pm)	12
	Questionnaires	March 2012	500 issued	128
Draft Proposals	Open display for Councillors	20 th April 2012	Newry & Mourne District Council	23
	Questionnaires returned			
Draft Village Renewal and Development Plan	Draft Plan presented to Action Group	20 th April 2012	Newry & Mourne District Council	
	Draft Plan presented to Project Steering Group	Thursday 21 st June	Newry & Mourne District Council	

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community relations are strong Village is a main thoroughfare from Newry to Castlewellan Tourism potential Caters for both young and old Has a strong community network New housing – people have moved to the area – growing community All halls are used by the community Location within the Mourne Mountains Land available for development Halloween event 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is a main thoroughfare between Newry and Castlewellan No recreational area Nowhere to go for a walk in the village that is safe No crèche or after school groups No coffee shop No welfare rights service No health Village Lack of marketing of the chalets
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creation of a community forum Church of Ireland building as a potential community resource A Health Village A housing Fold Gym Events to bring people to Hilltown – something to attract walkers Further river fishing potential 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Traffic speed through the village Anti social behaviour at weekends Money being spent out of the village Sewage works not sufficient

3.5 Consultation Findings

3.5.1 Information Gathering Stage

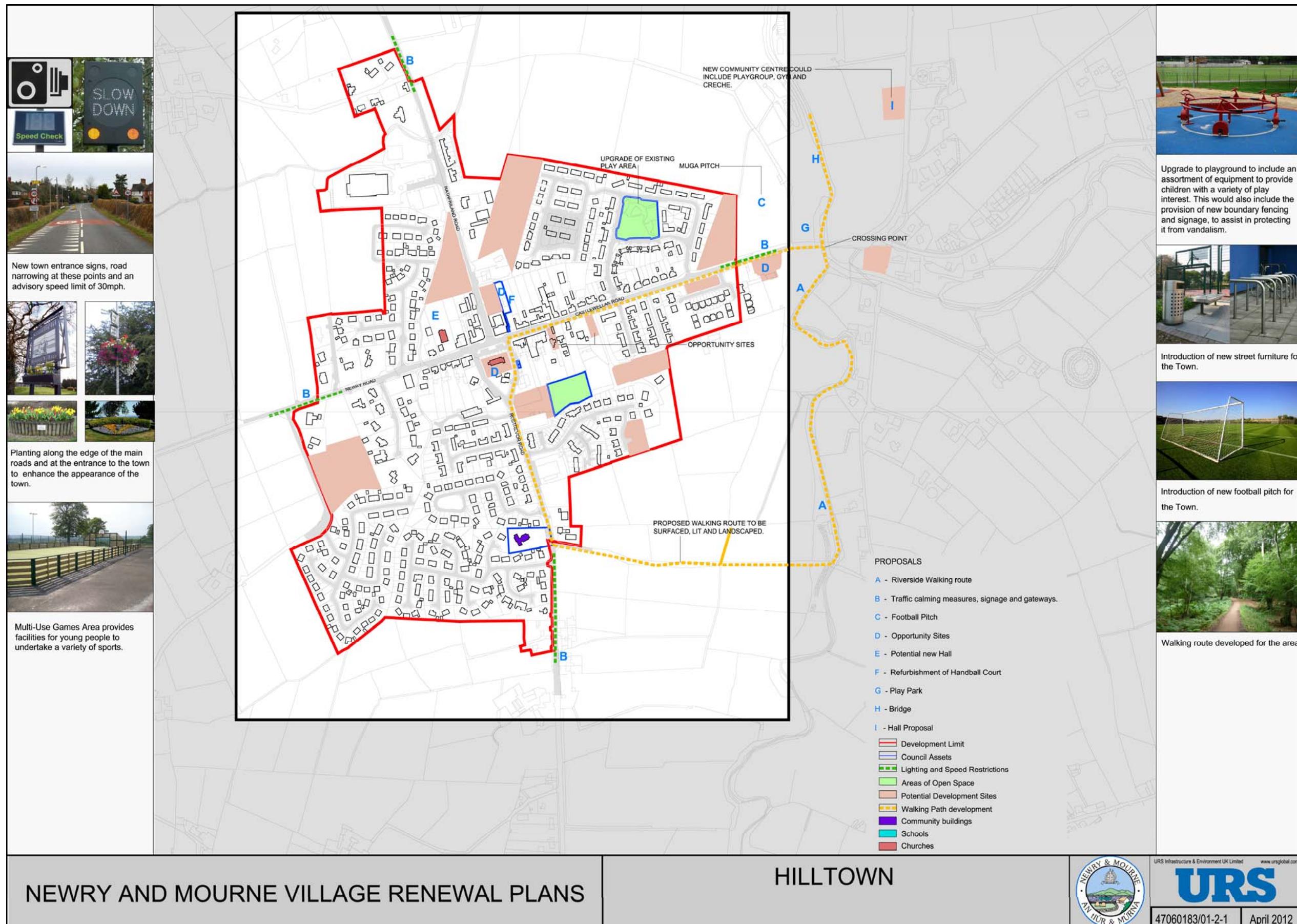
The SWOT Analysis below is a summary of the information gained during the early information gathering stage. The strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats were identified during the initial consultation workshops and the initial questionnaire which was circulated throughout the community. The questionnaire addressed a range of factors, focusing on 3 general themes of Planning and Infrastructure, Essential Services and Economic and Community Development.

An introductory meeting was held on Tuesday 8th March with a range of stakeholders in order to gain an understanding of the main community issues.

3.6

Vision

Hilltown will build on its strong community spirit, delivering new projects for the benefit of both the community and visitors. The village will cater for both young and old with events and activities to suit all age groups taking place throughout the year. It will also make the most of its setting within the Mourne Mountains, increasing its offering to tourists and walkers.



3.6.1 Draft Proposals

The draft Hilltown Village plan was put on public display in Carcullion House for a two week period from Monday 30th April until Friday 11th May 2012. In order to gain further feedback from the public a questionnaire was available asking the community to comment on proposals as well as prioritise them.

In total there were 18 questionnaires returned, from a mixture of members of community groups and members of the public. The response was extremely positive with almost all the recipients 'liking' all the proposals, with no more than two people disliking any of the proposals.

The questionnaire also encouraged people to rank the projects and proposals in order of importance to help establish the key priorities. Clearly different members of the community have different opinions on what they feel are priorities for their area, however there are also key issues which people are clearly agreed upon. For example 9 out of 18 respondents identified the creation of a new river walk as the number one priority for the Village. All projects with the exception of the refurbished handball court, identified within the plan were noted by at least one respondent as being of the highest priority, traffic calming measures, signage and gateways, a new play park, improved street lighting and the river walk were the most popular proposals. This section of the report will provide some additional detail on these projects.

3.7 Initiatives

3.7.1 Riverside Walk

Situated at the foothills of the Mourne Mountains, Hilltown benefits from a beautiful setting and magnificent views. The community identified the lack of a well defined and managed walking route through the village. In addition, the traffic speeds and dangerous crossing points were also identified. As a result, a redeveloped riverside walk and new crossing point identified as a project with strong community backing. The new walking route could be used to promote healthier living for the community of Hilltown as well an attraction for walkers who use the Mourne Mountains. Attracting walkers into the village can benefit the local economy if they avail of local services.



Indicative image of a new riverside walk

3.7.2

Traffic calming, signage and gateways

Traffic speed is a major issue for Hilltown Village. As a main thoroughfare between Newry and Castlewellan a large amount of traffic passes through the village on a daily basis. Traffic calming measures are proposed on the Newry and Castlewellan Roads at the entry points into the village. Currently traffic is able to pass through the centre of the village at speed which creates a major health and safety risk for pedestrians crossing the road. Improved signage, road markings and defined crossing points are potential projects for the village.



Road markings, signage and speed humps.

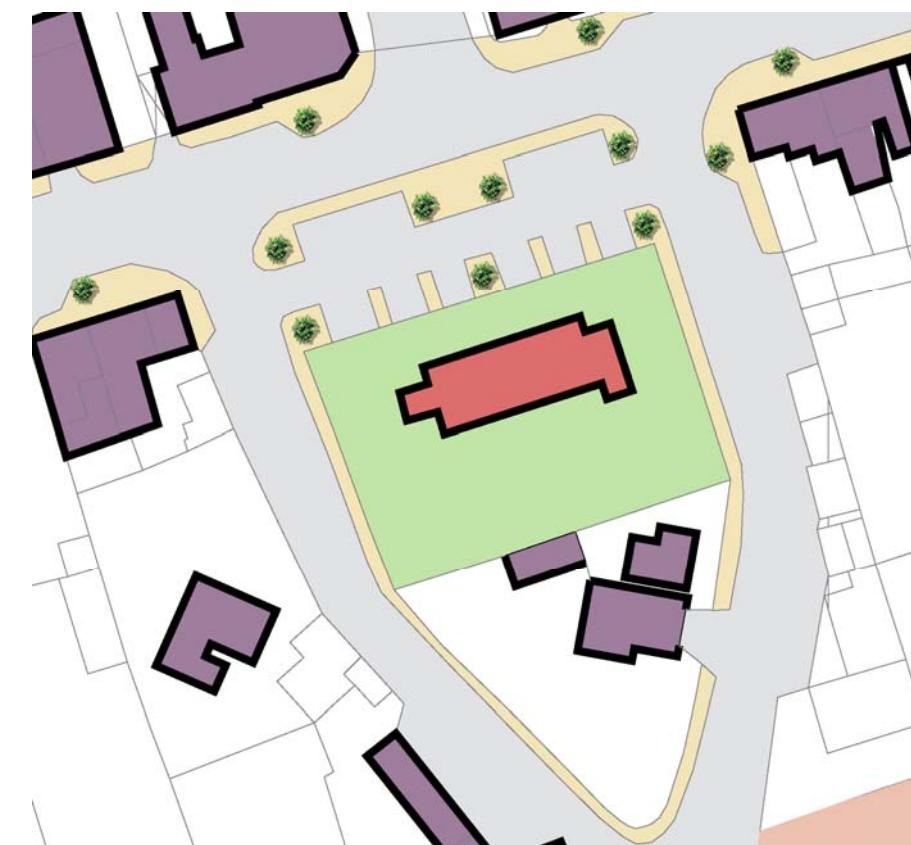
3.7.3 New Play Park

A new play area is proposed which would cater for children throughout Hilltown and is located to the east of the village off the Castlewellan Road. A new play park would also add to the new riverside walk, creating activity in the area and helping to create a family friendly location.



Proposed Play Park

3.7.4 Refurbishment of Church of Ireland building



Church of Ireland – Community Development project

The Church of Ireland building is clearly an important building within Hilltown, situated right in the heart of the Village. The local community have plans to develop the former church into a new community hub. Its central location means this is an ideal use for the building. Should the building be allowed to fall into further disrepair it will have a major impact on the townscape quality of Hilltown. From a community and townscape perspective this is clearly a worthy project which has strong community support. As a community hub the building could house a new coffee shop, tourist information point, museum and space for events to take place. As the building is a B1 graded listed building, any proposals should be in keeping with its character and to the satisfaction of The Northern Ireland Environment Agency historic buildings unit.

3.8 Action Plan

ACTION PLAN						
Initiative		Priority	Timescale	Potential Funding Opportunities	Actions	Indicative Costs
Riverside walking route	RS, RDP	H/ M	S/ M	RDP	Develop route in more detail addressing land ownership issues. Develop design to achieve necessary consent.	£250,000 - £400,000
Traffic calming measures, signage and gateways	RS	H	S/ M	RS RDP	Review of feasibility of traffic calming measures. Consultation with RS, road improvement works. Feasibility study, design work, statutory approvals, installation of gateway signage and artwork.	£40,000 - £70,000
New Football pitch	HCG, NMDC	M	M	RDP, SNI	Access availability of land and consult with Planning service on any restrictions. Ascertain who will take ownership of maintaining pitch	£60,000 - £80,000
Development of opportunity sites	HCG, Priv	H/ M	M/ L	Priv	Market conditions will dictate development of sites.	N/A
Potential new hall	HCG	M	M	RDP, Lot	Consult with Church on current status of plans to develop a new hall. Achieve all necessary consents.	£150,000- £200,000
Refurbish Handball Court	HCG, Priv	M	M	SNI	Appraise costs necessary to refurbish court prior to researching funding opportunities.	£2000 - £20,000
Play Park	HCG, NMDC	H	S/ M	RDP	Research availability of land. Consult with Planning Service on any restrictions on land. Prepare costings on equipment required.	£100,000 - £150,000
New Bridge	HCG, RA	M	M	RDP	Consult with Rivers Agency on potential for new crossing point	£20,000 - £50,000
Community hub proposal – former COI	HCG, COI	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.	£300,000 - £500,000
Crossing point (Castlewellan Road)	RS, HCG	H	S	RS	Consult with Roads Service on new crossing point to highlight health and safety concerns.	£5000
Upgrade existing play area	NMDC, HCG	H/ M	S/ M	NMDC	Consult with Newry and Mourne District Council on potential to upgrade existing play park and availability of future funding.	£50,000 - £75,000
Street lighting	RS, HCG	H	S	RS	Consult with Roads Service on health and safety concerns and potential to introduce new street lighting.	£30,000 - £50,000

Priority:
H = High
M = Medium
L = Low

Timeframe:
S = Short (1-3yrs)
M = Medium (3-7 years)
L = Long (7-15years)

Delivery Agents, Funders an Stakeholders:

AC	Arts Council	NITB	Northern Ireland Tourist Board
MNDC	Newry & Mourne District Council	Priv	Private Sector
DCAL	Department for Culture, Arts and Leisure	PS	Planning Service
Lot	Lottery Funding	PSNI	Police Service of Northern Ireland
RS	Roads Service	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	DOE	Department of Environment
DRD	Department for Regional Development – Street Lighting	RA	Rivers Agency
NIE	Northern Ireland Electricity	HCG	Hilltown Community Group
COI	Church of Ireland		
Tran	Translink		
NIW	Northern Ireland Water	BT	British Telecom

* Projects which have been identified by the community as a High Priority are outlined in more detail in the Initiatives section of this report.

3.9 Conclusion

The Church of Ireland building acts as the centre piece of the Village. As the church is no longer in use it is important that another use for it is found to ensure it does not fall into disrepair and create a blot on the landscape in such a central location. A continued community use for the church would be an ideal solution as well as creating a central hub within Hilltown.

The high number of responses received to the first consultation exercise highlights there is an interest and pride among the community. It is vital that this translates into a drive to deliver the projects highlighted within the plan. With expectations and interest raised it is important that people see physical changes to Hilltown. The danger is apathy can set in if nothing changes.

The proposed riverside walk, new play area, community hub and traffic calming measures are all projects which the local community can take ownership of and drive through to implementation. Each of the projects is designed to benefit community life and safety within Hilltown.

4 Appendix 1 - Newry Villages Community Questionnaire

Hilltown

Northern Ireland rural development programme 2007 -2013

Introduction

The Northern Ireland Rural Development Programme (NIRDP) 2007-2013 was launched to build capacity within local communities and provide support for community economic development in the most disadvantaged rural areas. The NIRDP is part financed by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) and is managed by the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development. A core principle of the approach to broader rural development in Northern Ireland has been and continues to be that the communities which most closely experience problems should be involved in the design and delivery of projects and programmes to tackle such problems and, thus, improve their quality of life.

The NIRDP contains a number of measures under each axis. These measures are specific areas where support is to be targeted. Each measure was selected from a menu of options provided by the European Union in order to target the aspects of rural life that are most important to Northern Ireland. Measure 3.5 targets Village Renewal and Development with the aim of "creating long term visions for villages and surrounding areas and to support initiatives promoting cross-community development".

The objective is enable and encourage residents of villages and surrounding areas to create a vision and an integrated action plan to ensure the full potential of their area is achieved and also to support integrated village initiatives.

How is the Programme administered at a local level?

The Southern Organisation for Action in Rural areas (SOAR) is the Joint Committee and Local Action Group for the Craigavon, Armagh and Newry & Mourne Council areas. They are responsible for the administration of the NIRDP within the rural areas of Craigavon, Armagh and Newry. SOAR local action group is comprised of local Councillors and Social Partner Representatives. Craigavon Borough Council acts as the Lead Council with responsibility for all financial and administrative matters.

Renewal and Development Plans for NMDC Villages

Newry and Mourne District Council have secured funding under Measure 3.5 for the preparation of Integrated Village Plans for 13 pre-selected villages and clusters across the Newry and Mourne District Council Area.

URS were employed by Newry and Mourne District Council to facilitate the development of these plans. The plans will be prepared between February and June 2012, with potentially a second stage which will involve selected projects being taken forward to the stage of submitting an outline planning application, making a submission for funding or being ready to feed into an economic appraisal.

Questionnaire

This questionnaire will help us establish the key strengths and weaknesses of your settlement. Please take a few minutes to fill it in as best you can and please give us as much information as possible.

Settlement: Hilltown

1.	What is your interest?	Business	8	Community Group	24	Individual	83
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Section 1 – Planning and Infrastructure

2. Please indicate which of the following issues are of concern or interest to your group:

ISSUE	Major Concern	Some Concern	No Concern
Traffic congestion/ Speeding through traffic	73	29	4
Parking availability	43	37	35
Pedestrian accessibility	39	32	22
Vehicular accessibility	19	25	35
Accessibility for disabled persons	35	38	18
Availability of housing for local people	24	28	42
Impact of new housing on your village	17	36	34
Quality of existing road network in the village	28	28	35
Sewage and Mains Water supply	15	24	50

If you indicated that you have concerns about any of the above issues please expand on your answers below or on a separate sheet:

- Pedestrian Lights required
- Speed limit not slowing traffic
- People abandon cars to pop into shops
- House Executive should buy and rent out empty houses
- Young drivers speed around village at night
- Lift required in hotel for elderly / disabled access to function room
- More Council houses required
- Need pedestrian crossing at lower end of Main Street
- Sewage / Water mains needs updated if more housing built
- No facilities for disabled

- Elderly find it difficult to cross the road
- Parking issues (cars parked on pavements)
- Delivery vehicles block roads - Delivery bays needed for lorries / vans
- Roundabout needed at Square
- Dog foul on pavements
- More disabled parking required
- Village untidy
- Large housing estates spoil the village
- Social housing is not going to locals
- Housing developments have caused a loss of community
- Square always congested with cars
- Businesses need disabled access
- Too much anti social behaviour
- More parking required – some cars parked all day
- Footpath required from Dana Place to Village
- Resurfacing of Rostrevor Road
- Traffic calming on Main Street
- Entrance to St Patricks is not wide enough
- Footpath resurfacing
- Roundabout at top of Rathriland Street
- Slow traffic signs at school
- Need for a river walk.
- Housing is very expensive
- Footpaths and dropped kerbs in a poor state
- Sewage infrastructure problems
- Speed ramps to slow cars
- Only one disabled space in Hilltown.
- Lack of cross community relations between Hilltown and Rathriland
- Parking in Square should be short term only

- Parochial Hall
- Hand Ball alley
- Ballymaglory building site at 8 mile bridge
- Play area adjacent to Ardmore Park
- Village Inn
- Old houses that have been neglected
- Old petrol station, Rostrevor Road
- Allotments
- Mary Quinn's house ideal as playschool site.
- Carquillion vacant site is a dumping ground. Needs fenced off for safety and developed.
- 2 derelict buildings on Castlewellan Road
- More development between Hilltown and Rathriland and Hilltown and Rostrevor
- Community Garden at C of I
- Properties either side of the river are prime sites

Section 2 – Essential Services (Please expand on answers if possible)

4. Please indicate which of the following issues are of concern or interest to your group:

ISSUE	Major Concern	Some Concern	No Concern
Provision and access to local healthcare facilities	32	41	27
Provision and access to educational facilities	12	26	52
Quality of public open space	38	28	28
Availability of play areas for children	54	33	16
Public transport service in the area	28	31	38
Provision of public leisure facilities	54	26	15
Quality and provision of retailing/local shops	11	36	45

3. Are there any development opportunity sites (ie. sites or buildings which are derelict, or underused/vacant land, or something that may be described as an 'eyesore') within the village that you are aware of? If yes, where and what would you like to see developed?

- One development site on Main Street
- Many properties need 'facelift'
- Lodge – possibly turn into flats / apartment
- Church of Ireland as community building
- McCrackens House at corner of village
- Mussels Corner House
- Rough land behind car park at Ballygorian Church
- Restoration of 2 businesses either side of Bann River
- Mathews Garage
- Vacant pub could be redeveloped
- Bann Vale
- Smiths land
- Entrance to Ferns – Waste ground to right

5. What services are you aware of and are you happy in general with the range of services currently provided?

- Room for improvement
- No public transport after 6pm
- More public transport for rural areas
- Recycling facilities situated out of town
- No park for young people
- GAA club
- GAA land could be used for a leisure complex
- Good playschool but premises not up to standard, needs to be bigger
- Good school but entrance needs widened and traffic slowed down.
- Spar shop is good
- Need for a good coffee shop
- Playing fields
- Healthcare
- Great service at the Post Office
- Bank machine needed
- Litter removal from council
- Doctors
- Brown bins not supplied to all houses
- Recycling skip is very good
- No public spaces

- Bus shelter
- Gym
- Café/restaurant
- Arts Group exhibition venue
- Artist studios for hire
- Entrance to St Patrick's Primary not wide enough
- Allotments scheme
- Day care/ respite/ counselling facility
- More tourist information
- More benches in 'The Square'
- Need for a major shop
- Park area which caters for all age groups – tennis, fishing, play park etc.
- Badminton nights for over 25s. Exercise classes.
- Volunteer car drivers to assist with access to local/ area healthcare facilities
- Residential drama school
- Agricultural museum
- Planning Service Development plan does not allow for any future commercial or industrial growth. Needs to be expansion land for growth of Hilltown.

Section 3 - Economic and Community Development – (Please expand on answers if possible)

6. What other facilities or services do you feel should be provided for the village?

- Doctor / Dentist required in village
- 24hr ATM
- Welfare rights
- A fold for the elderly
- Safe play areas for children / park/ open space – fencing and CCTV
- Community bus for elderly
- Bank
- Leisure centre / swimming pool/ sauna, gym
- Walking / cycling routes – River walk
- Affordable childcare facilities
- Roundabout at top of village
- Ramps to slow down traffic
- Ring road around village
- Library
- More signage
- Bottle bank
- School needs more space
- Tennis courts
- All weather pitch
- Indoor meeting area / Internet café
- More classes in Carcullion House e.g. Cookery / Art etc
- GAA Club needs female changing facilities
- Recreational area for whole community

7. Are there any attractions which you feel could be developed for tourists or for use by local people?

- Old Lodge on Main Street
- Church of Ireland – (Possible Museum / Information Centre)
- More public walkways / Hill walking / Fishing
- Bann River Walk
- Better signage
- Coffee Shop / Craft Shop/ heritage centre
- Old Clonduff Walk needs footpaths
- Gateway to Mournes (Promote)
- Mullagariff & Lynsey's
- Artists studios & exhibition centre
- Clean up existing walking paths around the river and better lighting
- More signed walkways to the Mournes
- ATM machine
- Picnic areas, attractive seating in the Square
- B&Bs
- Walking paths on the back roads
- Mountain paths repaired
- Transport to take people to the two bogs in the summer
- Hotel needed
- Mourne Mountains
- Foot bridge over Bann
- Play ground
- Reclaim overgrown and blocked rights of way

- Planning Service should encourage development of tourist accommodation
- Parking for visiting anglers

8. Are there any features or assets within your village which you feel should be actively conserved?

- Lodge / Church
- Church of Ireland
- Turn Church into a museum
- Bann River & lane way need tidied up
- Old Motte & Bailey
- Clonduff Old Church/ graveyard
- Goward Dolmen
- Mass Rock
- Kinnahalla Youth Hostel
- The Square – paved pedestrian area
- Barvale House
- Mourne mountains as National Park
- Tourism

9. Are there good small business opportunities?

- Coffee Shop / Bakery
- Craft / Gift Shop
- B&B's
- Hostel for Backpackers
- Bicycle Hire / Camping Equipment hire
- Pony Trekking / Riding School
- Tourist Office
- Florist
- Further potential
- Creche
- After school club
- Bigger Butchers
- Some properties on Main street
- Area plan needs to make provision for business initiatives

10. Are there sufficient facilities available to local community groups and are they well used?

- Many facilities need modernised
- GAA / Youth Club popular
- Carcullion House is well used

- Community Centre needed
- Facilities insufficient for expanding population
- Plenty of buildings but community infrastructure not yet in place
- No day care, respite, counselling
- Not used to full potential
- Youth club used to offer classes from SRC however they stopped.
- Good crèche needed
- Youth club needs to be renovated
- There are facilities but locals will not use them

11. Are there regular or well known community events or festivals? If not, what would you like to see?

- Annual events held – premises / facilities restricted
- Boley Fair (July)
- Clonduff Vintage Show (Easter)
- More cross community events
- Festivals bring anti social behaviour
- Best kept village competition
- More kids events
- Music festival
- Rethink of Boley fair to improve it
- More family events needed

Section 4 - General

Please tick the following statements to indicate your opinion:

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Strongly Disagree
The village is a generally attractive environment	20	63	16
The village centre has good places to eat and drink	18	59	23
The village is easy to find	32	65	2
Directions to public facilities are clearly signed	18	49	34
The village has an identifiable centre	26	58	15
The approach to the village is attractive and welcoming	17	51	31
The streets are kept clean of litter	17	64	23
Graffiti and vandalism in the village are a problem	12	43	47

There is a clear vision for the village centre	11	35	52
Street furniture is well maintained	11	52	39
Pavements are uncluttered and in good repair	6	41	56
There is value for money in local shops	10	57	35
There is a good choice and range in shopping	8	39	53
There are suitable traffic calming measures	6	19	76
The police are involved in initiatives to cut crime	15	56	29
There are distinct and well used car parks	6	40	54
Building fronts and facades are well looked after	10	60	30
The village has a vibrant atmosphere	13	62	26
There is sufficient street lighting	13	58	30
The village is safe to walk around at all times	12	64	26

- Flashing lights to slow traffic at the school
- Sense of community has gone
- Need to become proud of Hilltown again
- Street lights up Yellow Road
- Space behind Downshire Arms as a car park
- High quality restaurant

If you wish to expand on your answers to any of these statements please do so below or on a separate sheet:

- Traffic lights needed at Spar Shop
- Traffic calming needed at Carcullion House
- Hanging Baskets / Flower Boxes/ flower beds
- More litter bins
- Neighbourhood watch
- More street furniture
- Improve street lighting
- Weeds growing in pavements
- Litter problems
- Church of Ireland should not be allowed to deteriorate
- Village has places to drink but not to eat.
- Building fronts improved to make village more welcoming
- Village centre functions as a car park – no vision for it.
- Car parking is a problem
- Mace shops needs updated and a better choice and range with incentives to compete with Spar.
- Tidy up bridge on Castlewellan Road
- Flower bed at village entrance like Rostrevor's
- Street and pavements could be better maintained
- Public toilets not open long enough
- Lack of colour/distinction in the village – gardening club help provide volunteers to assist with support from council

