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Introduction

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 Killean. 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

Located 6 miles south-west of Newry and 10 miles North of Dundalk, Killean is a small village settlement residing along the border within rural Co. Down. The village derives its name from the Gaelic translation for the term “Little Cell” (Cillín) and rests within viewing distance of Slieve Gullion and its surrounding mountainous landscape which rest in the western distance. Killean also offers linkages with the Flagstaff Viewpoint, an ascending ridge-line on the southern side of the Newry River offering stunning panoramic views over Warrenpoint and Newry City.

Village Character

The village of Killean expresses a unique rural and picturesque setting with expansive views of the surrounding mountainous and gentle drumlin landscape. The character of the village embodies a traditional rural setting and border Village through its residential density and architectural fabric. Killean expresses its character further via surrounding points of interest which express the culture and heritage of the settlement. The village of Killean is home to the Church of St. Michael, a focal point of religious worship for those in the community and surrounding area and provides a distinctive landmark for the community. Additionally, to the East of the settlement at Ferryhill Road, rests the Clontygora Court Cairn, known locally as the ‘King’s Ring’ its is a megalithic tomb dating back to as long as 3500 BC. The structure had been built as a place of collective burial for those who cultivated the land and is a key tourist attraction for those interested in ancient history.

Today, the character and essence of the village is supported and maintained through a strong community spirit within the Village. The character and vibrancy of the community allow for the Village to sustain a multiple array of local groups ranging from a successful drama group, youth and walking group with intention to establish a village football club. Additionally, the distinctive culture and heritage of the Village is expressed through a wide range of highly skilled residents who specialise in Blacksmith, artistry and sculptural activities. Additionally, the Village comprises an extremely active community who benefit from the surrounding provision of walkways and paths, in particular, those associated with the Flagstaff viewpoint.
History and Development of the Village

The village of Killean focused its historical development key routes of transport and communication. Prior to this, it is assumed that the settlement originated at the lands surrounding the ancient Clontygora Court Cairn, however as time progressed, the village gradually noticed development along the key lines of communication and transport. Between 1832-1846, the village established a distinctive built form with two separate clusters found at the North and South of the Village. The morphology of the village did not alter dramatically from this point in time and as such the village consolidated its form and layout at the key nodes within Killean. Today, the village expresses an identical layout and form similar to its historical development with an established residential spine along the Killean School Road and clustering of housing at the crossroads of Jack’s Road and Clontigora Road. Additionally, for a village of its size, Killean comprises a diverse range of land uses ranging from industrial, Educational and religious services via BAK BIOMASS, Primary School and Church of St. Michael.

Village Profile

The village of Killean reflects a traditional social and economic demographic for a rural settlement of its scale. The Village falls within the Fathom ward within rural Co. Down. The village has a predominantly youthful population with 21.83% of residents being under 16 years of age whilst the older population comprises 11.96% of the total residents. Additionally, 36 years is the average age (median) for the ward. In relation to standards of health throughout the village and overall area, the ward expresses a predominantly healthy population as 83.02% of residents stated that their general health was either good or very good. However, 18.52% of residents had stated that they had a long-term health problem or disability that limited their day-to-day activity. Having established this, any future development and enhancement to services and amenities within the village must consider the needs and requirements of each demographic cohort.

Border with Republic of Ireland

Clontigora Road

Church of St. Michael (Credit: Eric Jones)

Clontigora Road

Flagstaff viewpoint (Credit: Paul Andrew Dunne)

Church of St. Michael (Credit: Eric Jones)

Clontygore Court Cairn (Credit: Curiousireland.ie)

Killean School Road

Church of St. Michael (Credit: Eric Jones)

Clontygore Court Cairn (Credit: Curiousireland.ie)

Flagstaff viewpoint (Credit: Paul Andrew Dunne)

Killean Primary School & Juvenile Pitch

Border with Republic of Ireland

Killean Primary School & Juvenile Pitch

Killy’s Road
Future Development

Despite the Banbridge, Newry and Mourne Area Plan 2015 having no designated sites for housing growth, the village comprises an active development climate in relation to the development of single, replacement and new build dwellings. Additionally, the development activity within the village is due to the continuous and gradual increase in population on an annual basis and the need to facilitate for this growth. Additionally, population growth and housing requirement may be subject to consideration as the new Local Development Plan for the District comes forward.

There has been growth within the Village population as shown in recent census data, and below highlights a number of new developments that have/are seeking planning permission within Killeen. It is important that this plan takes into account any new or proposed developments so that the future needs of new residents can also be taken into consideration in the plan development.

There is increasing development pressure in Killean due to its proximate location close to Newry, Armagh and the border with the Republic. As well as below, there are a large number of applications for extension to single dwelling and new single dwellings in the countryside, outside of the main settlement development limit. It is important that future patterns of development do not impact negatively on the character and amenity of the main Village by contributing to sprawl into the surrounding rural landscape. In order to aid the development of a sustainable rural community, the clustering of residential dwellings within the Village settlement nodes would support the future development of Killeen, by consolidating services and amenities within the established built up area.

Recent & Future Housing Development


A proposal to increase the quality and provision for residential units within the village at 33 School Road.

Community Services

Extension of to Killean Primary School to include multi-purpose hall and associated works. Status: Granted. Planning Reference: P/2014/0890/F

Erection of new block incorporating multi-purpose hall, stores, changing rooms, toilets and school meals accommodation, with extension to existing school building.


A proposal to deliver a creche facility within the Village at lands immediately north of Killean Primary School.

The development above highlights the growing need for services and amenities within the village to facilitate the continuous population growth of Killean and the wider rural area.
03 | Policy Analysis

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.

Banbridge / Newry and Mourne Plan 2015 (BNMAP)

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

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

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

**Village Walkabout**

A community walkabout took place in Killean on 25th May 2017 with representatives of the Council, the consultant team, and members of the local community. During this time a site survey was carried out to understand the background and context of the Village, key assets, issues and potential ideas of how the Village could be improved.

**Community Event**

A public consultation event for Killean Village Renewal Plan was held on the evening of the 4th October 2017 in the Meigh Community Centre. 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
- Landscape: Unique rural and picturesque setting
- Strategic location: Excellent linkages with Republic, Newry & Motorway
- Tourist Economy: Strong tourist economy for surrounding area
- Trails and Walking: Array of mystical and enchanting walking trails
- Local Skills: Highly skilled community in traditional crafts and activities
- Local groups: Diverse and successful Village groups

Opportunities
- Local Character: The Village comprises a strong cultural heritage
- Linkage to Flagstaff Viewpoint: Between Village and Viewpoint and Forest Canal onward to Omeath
- Hotel: Facilitation of local tourist economy
- Linkages with Sporting Pitch: Linkages with nearby sporting facilities could be enhanced
- Sporting Facilities: Potential redevelopment of sporting facilities
- Housing: An opportunity to deliver social and private housing provision
- Local Heritage: Expression and appreciation for heritage via community museum

Weaknesses
- Walkable Safety: Walking dangerous throughout Village and wider area
- Village Growth: Community would support the growth of the Village
- Parking: Provision for parking at the Primary is extremely limited
- Gateway Signage: Village expresses weak gateways
- Fly-Tipping: Illegal rubbish disposal at Flagstaff Viewpoint
- Football Pitch: Condition and quality of pitch requires attention

Threats
- Sporting Facilities: Concern surrounding future of Sporting Facilities
- Out-Migration: Younger people are moving away from the Village
- School: Requires protection as plays key role in community
- Funding: Potential lack of funding for particular projects
- Community Working: Potential lack in integrated community working
Following consultation with the community of Killean various projects have been identified that could contribute to the social and physical renewal of the settlement. The projects outlined in this draft plan are aspirations which are achievable with the relevant support. Constraints will face all the projects identified such as land ownership, funding and the requirement for statutory consents. However, such constraints can be addressed and overcome through dedicated and ongoing work by the community and other key stakeholders.

The opportunities presented in this plan range from enhancement to gateways, to an improved village centre and the potential to reconnect the village. The following illustrated opportunities are identified by the community as priority projects. Each project has the opportunity to bring environmental improvements, enhanced accessibility and connectivity, leisure and recreation provision and/or improved community facilities to the village and the community. Additional project opportunities are detailed in the action plan towards the end of the plan.

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

A Village Gateway
B Improved Environmental Quality
C Potential Community Space
D Enhanced Sport Facilities and Highway to Health
E Improved Pathway Route
F Project at Clonygorna Court Cairn
G Gate at Flagstaff Viewpoint
H Tourist Facility at Flagstaff Viewpoint
I Potential Glamping Site
J Linkages with Lough and Forest
K Formalise Pathway

Note - The entire area of this map lies within the Ring of Gullion Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
A project to enhance the village gateways and core areas at the school and village shop had been heavily supported throughout the consultation workshop. Environmental improvements at the village gateways and core areas will include improved landscaping and floral planting, improved signage and enhance boundary treatment to revitalise the physical appearance of the settlement. Currently, the gateway sites and key areas within the village are extremely tired and in need of urgent attention due to unkempt landscaping and physical environments.

Gateway sites play a key role in helping to slow traffic entering the village as they alert oncoming traffic upon entrance to a built up area. In order to improve the initial environmental quality of the Village, the project will aim to revitalise the key access routes into the village whilst improving the visual appearance of key areas within Killean. The installation of entry signage along with potential landscaping would uplift the key access routes into the village to express a sense of pride and community spirit.

In order to successfully implement this project, further consultation with the community and key stakeholders would need to be undertaken. The feasibility of the project should then be explored further including indicative costs. Detailed design would need to be undertaken and statutory approvals / funding would need to be secured.
A project to improve the standard and quality of the environment within the village. The quality and condition of the physical environment within the village is very tired, unkempt and in need of attention resulting in the visual degradation of Killean.

The natural history and heritage of the village is undermined via the absence of adequate signage, wayfinding and interpretive information panels which ultimately leads to an underperformance of the village in relation to expressing its culture and heritage. Having established this, a project to deliver an environmental improvement scheme within the village would vastly improve the environmental quality and condition of Killean whilst enhancing levels of safety via improved lighting and surfacing. Key areas within the village are the village shop and primary school which acts as focal point within the community. The installation of way-finding signage and interpretive panels would complement the enhancement of the physical environment whilst expresses the culture and heritage of Killean.

In order to successfully implement this project, further work is needed to establish the exact location and design for environmental improvement actions. This should be combined effort between the community and statutory bodies. Identifying an appropriate funding source is important so that the scale and design can be matched accordingly. The Department for Communities will be an important consultee in relation to the physical regeneration of the village.
C | RECONNECTING KILLEEN

A project to link the key areas of the village in order to help create a unified feel to Killean. Due to the form and layout of the Village, Killean expresses a sensation of disconnection between its key development nodes.

An opportunity to strengthen and improve the connectivity of the village will create a more unified Killean by improving linkages and safe connections for the community to use. Additionally, by linking the key assets within the surrounding village area, Killean will provide a safer walking environment for its community via the creation of safe walkable pathways improving accessibility and connectivity throughout and beyond the settlement.

In order to successfully deliver such a project, further consultation with the community, statutory approvals and necessary funding would need to be secured.
Killeen expresses a highly active community therefore a project to deliver a designated highway to health around the grounds of the sporting pitch would increase active living amongst a wide cohort of the community. Additionally, the community had stated that walking conditions throughout the wider Village are extremely dangerous due to the condition of lighting, paving and general levels of safety discouraging people from walking on a regular basis.

A designated Highway to Health project around the perimeter of the Village sports field lands would provide a safe, walkable and popular highway for residents and members of the community, benefitting standards of health throughout the wider Village.

In order to successfully deliver such a project, further consultation with the community, statutory approvals and necessary funding would need to be secured.
COMMUNITY FACILITY AT SPORTS PITCH

A project to enhance the provision for designated community space within the village core. Killean expresses an array of highly active community groups and organisations ranging from a village youth club, drama group and many more, however competition for space renders increasing pressure on current facilities within the Village. The continuous growth and development of the village will inevitably increase pressure upon services and facilities, resulting in increased competition for limited community space.

A project to explore the potential to deliver a purpose-built shared community facility would relieve the pressure on current services within the village, offering a greater provision and access to community services and amenities for residents within Killeen and the wider area. Additionally, an opportunity to develop a project at the sport pitch would ultimately consolidate and revive this area of the Village. The sports pitch is strategically located within community as it would complement the previous project mentioned in relation to reconnecting Killean.

In order to successfully deliver such a project, further consultation with the community, statutory approvals and necessary funding would need to be secured.
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 Action Plan (Section 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.
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<td>S-M</td>
<td>Com, NMDDC, Priv</td>
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<td>Com, NMDDC, TNI, Dfi</td>
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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  
Priv Private Landowners  
TNI Transport NI  
CDRCN Co. Down Rural Community Network  
PSNI Police Service Northern Ireland  
RDP Rural Development Programme  
DfC Dept. for Communities  
BIG BIG Lottery Fund  
HLF Heritage Lottery Fund  
ORNI Outdoor Recreation NI  
GAC Gaelic Athletic Club
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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.

Job number 251867-00