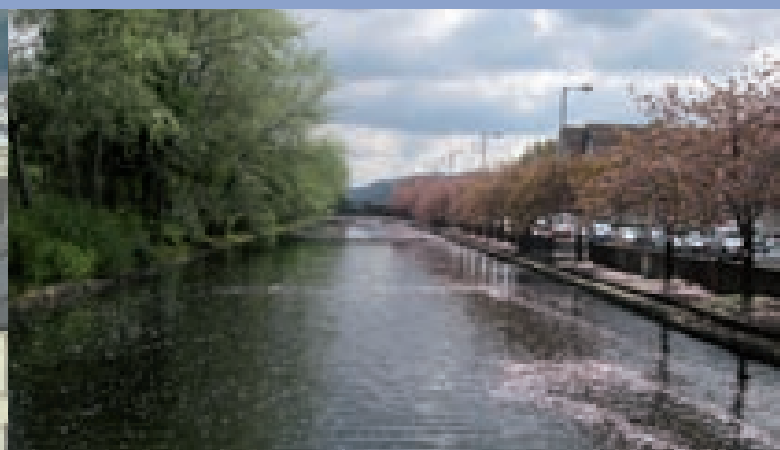
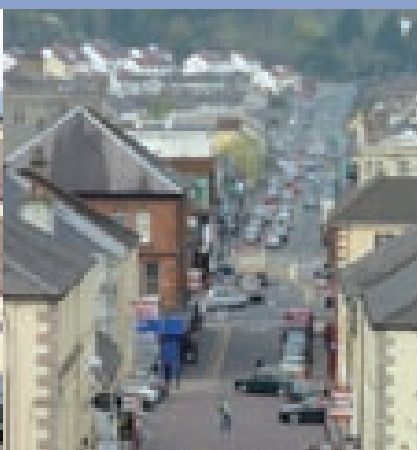


NEWRY

City Centre Masterplan



NEWRY CITY CENTRE MASTERPLAN

October 2011





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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 NEWRY CITY

The City of Newry sits upon the Clanrye River, as it makes its southwards journey to Carlingford Lough and the Irish Sea beyond. Closely following its path is the Newry Canal, the first such construction of its kind on these islands and a symbol of Newry's long established role as a place of innovation, commerce and trade. Today Newry remains a busy place. Hill Street, Buttercrane and the Quays have become synonymous with shopping, barges have made way for buses, lorries and cars and the city's population of 27,500 live in the neighbourhoods that clamber up the valley slopes. Whilst the canal has now fallen silent, the city has prospered and now looks ahead with confidence.

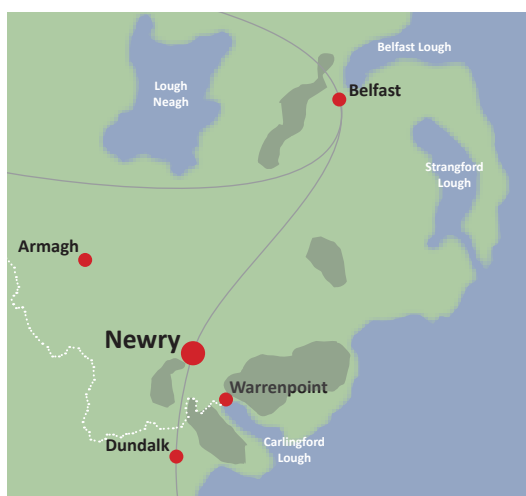
This Masterplan for Newry City Centre is about positively shaping that future. How can the city's retail and commercial activity be sustained and diversified, bringing benefit to all those who live and work there? Where should the buses, lorries and cars go and how can Newry's streets be better shared with people? How can the city's older buildings be brought back into meaningful use and what about the canal; can it be reawoken to play a role in the city again?

This document sets out a vision that answers such questions, capitalises on Newry's clear potential and importantly, maps out how its transformation can be realised. It is founded on an in-depth understanding of the city and developed with the participation of its people.

1.2 PROJECT BACKGROUND

The Newry City Centre Masterplan will inform regeneration and development decisions relating to Newry City Centre over 10 – 15 year period. This masterplan will therefore be a key reference to all those with an interest in the future of the city, including local and central government departments, private businesses including developers and architects, the community and voluntary sectors and members of the public.

The Masterplan does not replace statutory planning policy for the area and will be used as a material consideration in planning decisions and to inform future policy. The Masterplan was compiled through an extensive process of public consultation and collaboration and should therefore be regarded as a shared vision for the future of the City.



1.3 CLIENT AND CONSULTANT TEAM

This Masterplan was jointly commissioned by Newry and Mourne District Council with the Department for Social Development (DSD). It is a key part of fulfilling both organisations commitment to the physical, social and economic regeneration of Newry and surrounding area.

The Masterplan was developed by a multidisciplinary consultant team, led by urban designers and landscape architects, The Paul Hogarth Company. The team also comprised of specialists in Planning, Transport, Economics, Costs and City Centre Management.



Department for
**Social
Development**
www.dsd.ni.gov.uk



the paul hogarth company



TownCentre
SOLUTIONS



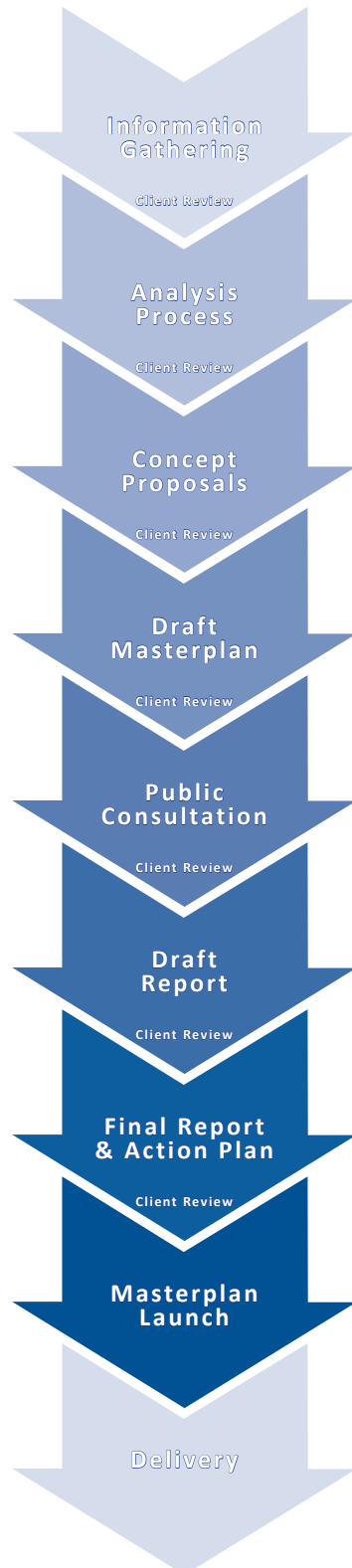
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1.4 MASTERPLAN PROCESS



The Masterplan process commenced in May 2010 and took 14 months to complete. It began with an in depth process of desktop research, site appraisal and stakeholder consultation, including a City Centre Health Check and Retail and Commercial Leisure Capacity Study. The findings of this process led to the development of a shared vision for the city, followed by the production of a draft masterplan. The draft was widely published in December 2010 and underwent a 14 week process of public consultation. The feedback from this process was then used to finalise the plan, launched by DSD Minister Nelson McCausland MLA in the autumn of 2011.

Throughout the Masterplan process, an Advisory Group monitored progress, scrutinised its findings and contributed to the development of the plan. The Group comprised of a wide cross section of the city’s stakeholders, including elected representatives, council and government officials and leaders of the business and community sectors (See Appendix 1). The client and consultant team would like to thank all members of the Advisory Group for their time and invaluable role in this process.



2. UNDERSTANDING NEWRY

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This section summarises the findings of the extensive analysis process undertaken to inform the masterplan. Like all modern day urban places, Newry is wonderfully complicated. Our cities are defined by the daily interplay of social and economic interactions, taking place in a physical environment that in Newry’s case has evolved over centuries.

Before one can successfully intervene at a citywide scale therefore, it is crucial to understand this complexity as much as one can and to identify key elements within it that may be positives upon which to build, or negatives that must be addressed. It is also now an established concern that for a variety of reasons, our towns and cities have become increasingly homogenised. It is therefore another important role of the analysis process to identify the distinctive elements that make Newry unique, so that they and the city’s identity can be strengthened and not lost, as it develops into the future.



Newry City Centre Figure Ground Plan

2.2 HISTORY

Newry has a long and interesting history, which as it predates the vast majority of its buildings, is less visible to the eye. Iubhair Cinn Tragh, the Irish name of Newry meaning ‘the Yew tree at the head of the strand’, gives us a clue to its origins. It is believed that St Patrick planted a Yew tree here as he arrived up the Clanrye River, thereby founding monastic life in Newry.

Whilst less welcome guests such as the Vikings would also arrive by sea, the 12th Century Normans recognised the strategic importance of Newry which grew into a medieval town, centred on the monastery in the vicinity of Bagenal’s Castle. With the exception of this building, medieval Newry has been in the most part destroyed, superseded by a new town planned along its river. Industrialisation saw the building of the Newry Canal in 1731, the first of its kind in the British Isles. As such, Newry grew into the island’s forth most important port, bringing cosmopolitan merchant wealth in its wake.

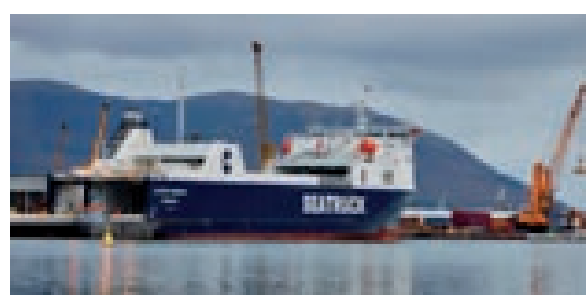
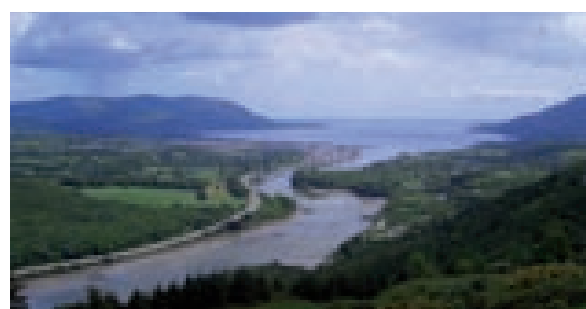
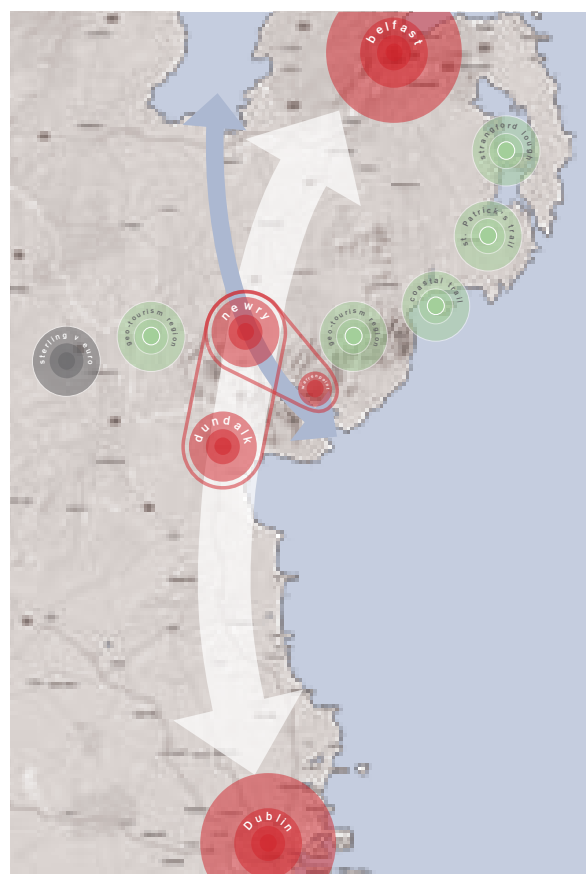
Notable personalities associated with town included the composer Hayden and the writer, Jonathan Swift, who famously described Newry as “*High church, low steeple, dirty streets, proud people*”. Over time the role of the port would decline, although Newry continues to this day as a centre of trade and retail. A turbulent 20th century, including a number of terrorism acts would test the resolve of the city and its people. Yet in today’s more peaceful times, Newry retains a pride in its history and an air of confidence, with which it looks forward to the future.

2.3 REGIONAL POSITION

Newry's strategic location has been an influential factor throughout its history and must therefore be central to any consideration of its future. Indeed, a number of clear positives may hold the key to its future prosperity.

For example, the city is set within a particularly attractive landscape, with the Mourne, Gullion and Cooley Mountain ranges all within close proximity, along with the dramatic Carlingford Lough a few kilometres to the south. Newry also has excellent regional transport connectivity, stemming from its position between Belfast and Dublin on the eastern seaboard. Recent investments now bring both cities within almost an hour's reach by road and rail, also making their 3 major airports easily accessible. Warrenpoint Harbour is located to the immediate south of Newry and is becoming an increasingly important freight terminal, also aided by recent investment. Improved cross border connectivity, bolstered by more formal ties with Dundalk in County Louth, also strengthens Newry's position at the regional scale.

These geographically based factors, bolstered by recent investments on both sides of the border, present Newry with significant opportunities. The area's rich landscape and accessibility is ideally suited to tourism, whilst also an attraction to those who may seek to relocate there. The city's regional position and connectivity should also attract new businesses, particularly those operating either side of the border. The challenge now for Newry is to provide the best possible physical, social and economic environment to fully capitalise upon such opportunities.



2.4 SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONTEXT

This Masterplan was compiled during a challenging economic period, as the UK and Ireland are in the early stages of post recession recovery. The result is invariably a reduction in spending by the public and private sectors in the short term, along with related impacts such as unemployment. Newry must therefore look to build on its current strengths to forge a sustainable vision for its economic development. Please refer to Appendix 2 to view a report on Newry's economic and planning context.

Current economic strengths include a growing population and strong demographic profile, with a forecasted growth above the Northern Ireland average. This provides an educated workforce and projected demand for city centre services, facilities and accommodation. Newry also performs relatively well in retail, benefitting from a cross border catchment area. The economic returns of this existing city centre activity have potential to be spread through diversification into compatible sectors of leisure and evening entertainment. Newry has also recently demonstrated an ability to attract service industries, drawn to a relatively low cost base and improved infrastructure. Scope therefore exists to nurture this trend and equip the city for further investment.

The economy of Newry cannot, however, be divorced from that of surrounding areas. Firstly significant number of residents close to the city centre experience high levels of deprivation. An onus is therefore placed on initiatives to bring benefits to these communities. Secondly, the city centre must remain the focus for appropriate investment, with a risk that out of town office and retail developments could hamper its ability for sustained growth.

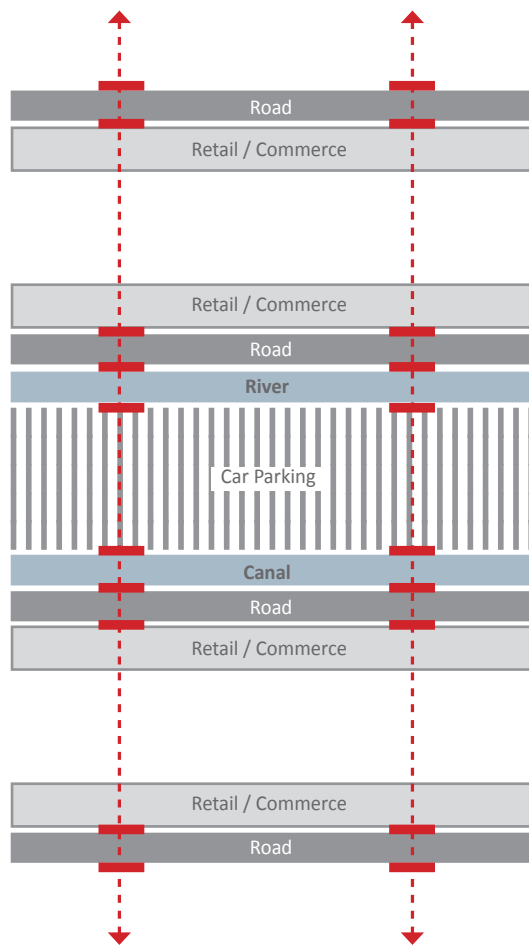
2.5 CITY ASSETS

Newry City Centre has a number of physical assets that are intrinsically linked to its character and identity. The natural setting of Newry, located in the valley of the Clanrye River, gives its centre a distinctive backdrop of valley slopes. This results in many vantage points across the city centre, giving residents and visitors alike a sense of orientation and physical perspective. However, it also means that development on these slopes has a visual impact on the city centre, requiring a particular attention to architectural quality.

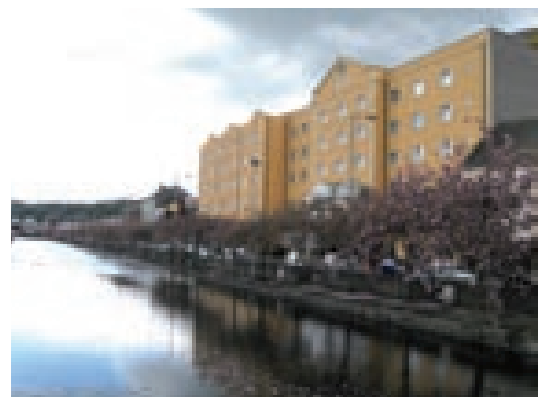
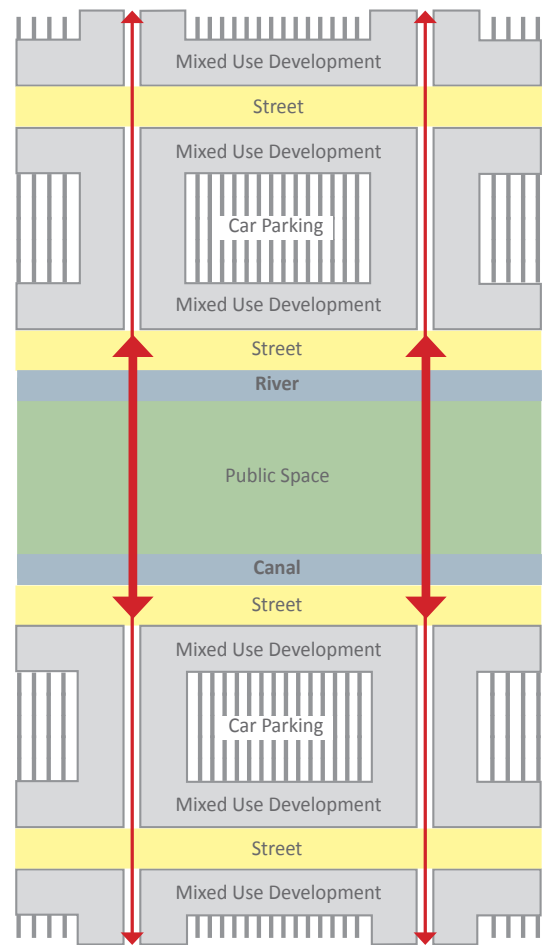
The city centre itself has a number of fine buildings, the most iconic of which is the Town Hall that uniquely straddles the Clanrye River. Other important landmarks are the imposing granite Cathedral of St Patrick and St Colman, as well as the recently restored Bagenal's Castle on Abbey Way. Newry has other, lesser well known buildings that are as integral to its character. These include former warehousing on Sugar Island and Merchant's Quay. Although often modest in scale, such buildings are a vital part of the city centre's character.

Arguably the most unique physical attribute of Newry are its twin watercourses of the Clanrye River and Newry Canal. Flowing side by side through the length of the city centre, they provide a strong visual link to the city's history, a rich habitat for fish and birdlife in very central location and a special focal point quite unique to city centres elsewhere in the continent.

Existing Waterfront Environment



Potential Waterfront Environment



2.6 ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

Whilst it has some fine buildings, analysis revealed that Newry City Centre has a variable environmental quality, with 5 key factors contributing to this condition.

Firstly Newry has a number of buildings that are either derelict or in a poor state of repair. They are distributed across the city centre, with those in prominent locations having the most negative impact. Reasons for their condition vary, but a common underlying theme is high costs associated with modernising buildings that are no longer fit for purpose, set against relatively low land values making such investment difficult to justify. The result is a city centre with substantial physical capacity for brownfield development in its centre, yet difficulties in taking it forward.

Secondly, the environmental quality of Newry city centre is compromised by buildings that have a poor relationship with its streets and spaces. Along the canal, for example, many buildings have effectively 'turned their back' on this unique feature. The result is that pedestrian activity levels are greatly reduced, in turn having an impact on perceived levels of safety and security, especially at night.

The third contributing factor to Newry's variable environmental quality is land use distribution. Linked to the aforementioned issue of land values, Newry City Centre has a number of land uses that contribute little to the street scene, sometimes having a negative impact on surrounding areas. Uses such as wholesale distribution centres, mechanics garages and car showrooms are rarely suited to confined urban spaces such as those in the City Centre.

Care must be taken not to jeopardise existing economic activity in the city centre. However, mutual benefits to owners and the city could be realised by relocating such business to more suitable premises elsewhere in the city.

The compact nature of the city centre's historic development pattern leads to the fourth factor affecting Newry's environmental quality. Newry has a lack of public open spaces and in particular, green spaces such as public parks and gardens. This has resulted in an environment that discourages people from pursuing recreational activities in the centre. Encouraging people to spend more time in the city centre would have a direct economic benefit to footfall dependant businesses, also improving air quality and making the city centre more attractive.

Finally the fifth environmental factor that greatly affects Newry is traffic. Over time, vehicles have come to dominate the city centre, be they in motion or stationary. The result is that the quality of the environment for pedestrians is compromised, particularly along narrow streets where footpaths widths are minimal. Furthermore, unique attributes of the city centre, such as its canal and river, have been greatly compromised by the intensive use of adjacent land for car parking.

Efforts to address these 5 factors have commenced, with recent public realm projects a good example of how streets can be improved to benefit people, businesses and the city. However, through the masterplan, substantial further work is required to tackle these factors in a coordinated manner, making Newry City Centre a more successful place in which to live, work, visit and play.

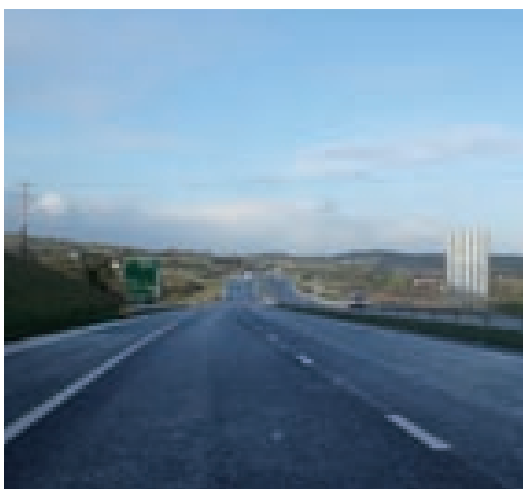
2.7 MOVEMENT AND LINKAGES



The ease with which Newry City Centre is accessed and navigated is very closely linked to its ability to function successfully as place of commerce, culture and civic life. As this chapter has illustrated, transportation brings both positives and negatives to the city at present. Positives include much improved linkages at a regional level, with investments made in road, rail and sea. However, a dominance of vehicles in the city centre has impacted negatively upon its environmental quality. Understanding the dynamics of this situation is therefore important, so that good linkage and environmental quality can coexist at all levels, enabling Newry to develop and prosper. Please refer to Appendix 3 to view a report on Newry's transport provision'.



It is essential for business life in Newry that people can access the city centre easily. At present, congestion is common place on access roads into the city, including the Dublin Road, Camlough Road and Belfast Road, with anecdotal evidence to suggest this discourages people from making the journey. This impacts rail users too, with Newry Railway Station positioned next to the A1 bypass. The masterplan must, therefore, look at ways to alleviate this problem and ensure that people can move easily between strategic roads and rail and the city centre's local roads.



City centre congestion is also generated by through traffic, much of it coming to and from the A2 coast road which links Newry to Warrenpoint and onwards to Kilkeel. This problem is worsened by a high frequency of heavy goods vehicles (HGV's) servicing Warrenpoint Harbour that are required to cross the city centre to reach the M1 motorway.

Existing proposals to connect this road directly to the A1 via a new Southern Relief Road bridging the Clanrye River would have significant benefits to Newry, alleviating city centre streets such as Abbey Way and Dublin Bridge from heavy traffic. Reduced traffic flows would in turn make the city centre safer and open up possibilities to redesign streets to function better for pedestrians.

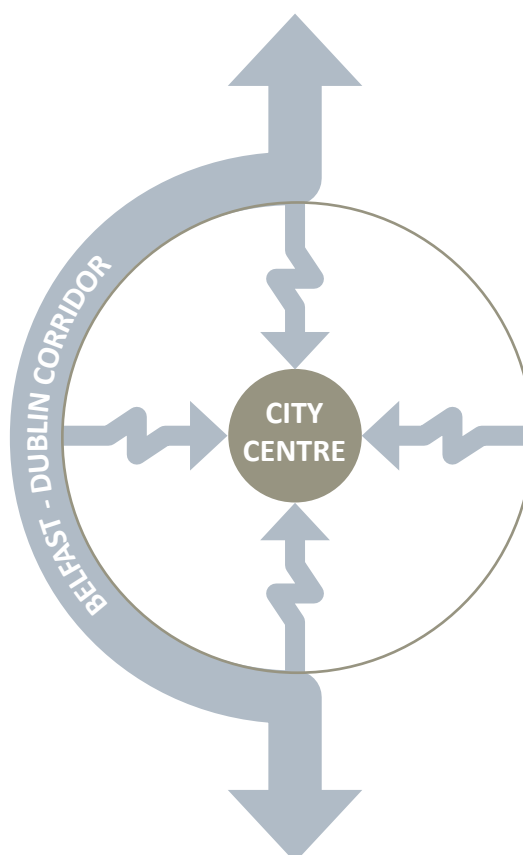
Another cause of traffic in Newry City Centre is car parking. Whilst a common belief is that insufficient spaces exist, research for this masterplan suggests that enough spaces do exist, but not necessarily in the right places. This results in vehicles having to loop the city centre in search of spaces, thereby generating more traffic in the process. The masterplan must therefore examine the most appropriate locations for car parking to prevent this additional trip generation.

Another reason for the perceived shortage of parking spaces in Newry is all day occupancy of convenient central spaces by city centre workers. This can also impact local businesses, as prospective shoppers and other visitors are unable to find a space, therefore increasing the risk of them taking their business elsewhere. Whilst the introduction of ticketed on street parking has helped reduce this problem, the masterplan should provide a strategy for parking to help 'the right people park in the right places' as much as possible.

As noted previously, it is pedestrians and cyclists who are impacted most by vehicular dominance in the city centre.

Narrow pavements, difficult and dangerous crossing points, noise and air pollution are all deterrents to people moving around the city centre by foot or bicycle. This effects tourists and shoppers, but more importantly, local people – particularly those who cannot drive due to age, ability or income.

Finally, signage is another important means of helping motorist, cyclists and pedestrians to navigate the city. Scope exists for improvement across Newry, starting with approaches to the city, right down to pedestrian signage informing people of shopping areas, tourist attractions, car parks and community facilities. Care must be taken, however, for signage not to add to the clutter of the street scene, requiring a coordinated approach and good design.



2.8 CONSULTATION FINDINGS

Researching the Newry City Masterplan was heavily informed by the views of local people. Indeed, those who live and work in Newry know the city most well, making their contribution particularly valuable. Consultation took the following forms:

- a Masterplan Advisory Group comprised of key city stakeholders (see Appendix 1)
- one to one interviews with representatives from the public, private and community sectors
- a City Centre Health Check that included onstreet and telephone interviews
- a public exhibition of draft proposals (see Appendix 4), on show in the city centre and online, accompanied by a feedback questionnaire
- workshop events to gain feedback on draft proposals, held with councillors, business people, interest groups and school pupils

The findings of consultation on the existing city are summarised in this section, with a full report contained in Appendix 5.

Feedback suggests that the most popular features of Newry amongst its residents include its choice of shops, its landmarks such as the Town Hall and Canal and the quality of its schools. Another recurrent theme was the friendliness of Newry.

Indeed, this was experienced first hand by the consultant team and whilst impossible to quantify, is an invaluable strength of Newry and vital component in attracting more people to the city.

Another key strength identified is the comparative degree of fluid communication between the city's stakeholders, including elected representatives, public sector authorities, private sector businesses and local communities. This dialogue is an essential first step in improving the city and whilst there is always room for improvement, this must be maintained and enhanced throughout.

Amongst critical public feedback on the city, the most commonly raised was traffic and car parking. Genuine concerns exist amongst elected representatives, business owners and the general public regarding the extent of congestion in the city centre and the availability of free car parking.

This is closely linked to the concerns of many city centre retailers, who fear that congestion and a lack of free parking, combined with a lack of signage and planned out of town retail combine to make trading conditions difficult in the city centre. A clear message from this feedback is that shoppers must be able to access the city centre with ease.

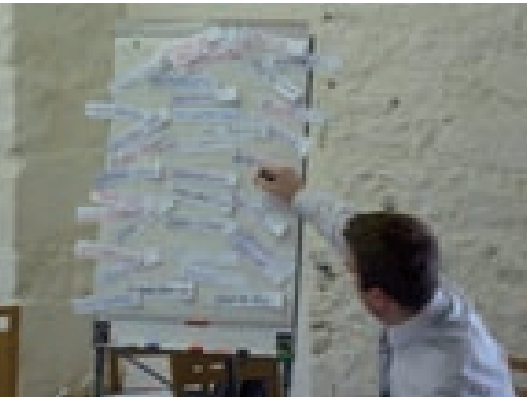
Conflicting messages were received regarding perceptions of environmental quality. Survey results indicated that most respondents felt Newry's environment compared favourably compared with other towns and cities.

2.9 ANALYSIS CONCLUSIONS

However, workshop feedback ascertained that residents and stakeholders have concerns, including a lack of green open space and the condition of the Clanrye River.

Finally, a recurrent issue raised was the capacity of the city to deliver comprehensive regeneration. This is set in the context of challenging economic times and a perception that few large public projects have been implemented in the city centre. These concerns must therefore be addressed through appropriate organisational and funding arrangements by which to deliver the masterplan, along with effective two way communication with the public regarding its delivery.

The findings of the extensive research and analysis process give a clear indication of qualities to be maintained and capitalised upon, as well as issues to be addressed through this masterplan. Like many city and town centres, Newry faces challenges such as the survival of independent retail alongside high street chains, the successful accommodation of vehicles whilst maintaining environmental quality and the means by which to prevent its older buildings falling into disrepair. Yet its regional connectivity, strength in retail, physical attributes and friendliness of its people provide strong foundations upon which to develop a vision for the future.



“Newry will confidently take its place on the international stage as a low-carbon, sustainable city, building on the firm foundations of its entrepreneurial, merchant spirit. The City will guarantee a high quality of life for all its people and a warm welcome to those who visit.”



3. ENVISIONING NEWRY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This section sets out the overarching vision for the future of Newry City Centre. Arriving at a degree of consensus across the city regarding the future of its centre is a key first step in the masterplan process. The adjacent vision statement was compiled through a collaborative stakeholder workshop and consulted upon in draft with the public. This shared statement serves as a goal for all those with a stake in the future of the Newry City Centre. All projects, no matter how large or small, should be judged on their ability to contribute to the fulfilment of this vision.

3.2 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

To accompany the vision statement, a series of sustainable Aims and Objectives have been identified. Also developed through consultation and based on the positives identified through analysis, these will hold the key to realising the Shared Vision, setting place ambitious targets for the City Centre to attain.

International City

"Newry City Centre will be the heart of an international city"

- Continuing the City's pursuit of greater sustainability, demonstrating how small cities like Newry can be successful whilst reducing their impact on the environment
- Realising Newry's potential as an international tourist destination, as a hub from which to explore the wider area
- Pursuing benefits of increased cross border linkage and its relationship with Dundalk in particular
- Capitalising upon its role as a gateway to the island of Ireland from the sea and to Northern Ireland via its land border

Welcoming City

"Newry City Centre will continue to give a warm welcome to all"

- Continuing to ensure that the city, its streets and spaces are as inclusive and safe as possible
- Developing Newry's position as a tourist destination
- Enhancing its strong identity and reputation as a friendly destination
- Keeping the city centre as vibrant and animated as much as possible
- Providing effective and welcoming signage on approach to the city and at key arrival points

Healthy City

"Newry City Centre will be a healthy place for all who live there"

- Proactively addressing issues of poverty and disadvantage
- Developing Newry's role as a centre for healthcare provision
- Pursuing excellence in primary, secondary, tertiary and life long education
- Providing good quality space for play and recreation
- Keeping its streets safe and clean for all users
- Reducing pollution and a dependency on fossil fuels

Competitive City

"Newry City Centre will punch above its weight as a place for business and investment"

- Sustaining its role as a retail destination
- Maintaining excellent connectivity with the rest of the city and region
- Ensuring the city centre remains open for business, with an investment friendly environment
- Providing a highly skilled workforce





4. PLANNING NEWRY

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This masterplan sets out a range of proposals for the regeneration of Newry City Centre. Yet before detailing projects for specific locations, it is necessary to establish the development principles these projects should adopt in their planning, design and delivery stages. Wise planning decisions and good design are not a luxury. They must be a fundamental component of all projects in Newry City Centre and will be key to ensuring benefits of investment are not just the sole preserve of landowners or developers, whether private or public sector, but that they catalyse wider regeneration and bring benefits to the people of Newry.

4.2 MASTERPLAN PRINCIPLES

Protect and Enhance Historic Buildings and Landmarks

Newry has some fine buildings and landmarks, some of which are in excellent condition, others less so. In order to protect and enhance the distinctive identity of Newry, these important structures must be retained wherever possible.

It is recognised that restoring old buildings is often a more costly alternative to building anew. It is therefore important that sustainable development solutions are found for old buildings, including the identification of viable new uses, additional funding for restoration and good contemporary design that complements original architecture.

Introduce a Sustainable Transport Hierarchy

People must come first when shaping Newry's city centre for the future. All too often, the needs to private vehicles have taken precedence over the quality of the pedestrian environment. It is therefore proposed to introduce a sustainable transport hierarchy for the city centre.

This means that pedestrian's needs will be the first consideration in planning projects, followed by the cyclist, public transport and then private cars and service vehicles. This does not mean pedestrianisation, for which there are few city centre streets that would benefit. But it does mean a balanced approach to the creation of people friendly environments.

Develop a Network of Streets, not Roads

The difference between a 'street' and a 'road' is an important one. Streets are public spaces that serve a multitude of users and purposes. Roads are for the passage of vehicles and little else. Newry must therefore work to ensure that its city centre is comprised of safe, attractive and functional streets, accommodating the needs of premises along their lengths, whilst also making space for positive interactions.



Protect & Enhance Historic Buildings & Landmarks



Introduce a Sustainable Transport Hierarchy



Develop a Network of Streets, not Roads

Ensure Frontage onto Good Quality Open Space

Good urban spaces are very reliant on the buildings that form them to contribute positively to activity levels. Newry needs all of its city centre buildings to actively front onto adjacent streets, squares and parks. This ensures that the spaces are activated by the comings and goings of its occupants, that the spaces are made safer by the number of eyes looking over them and streets are lively, stimulating places to be. This then provides the context for good quality public realm and landscape design, ensuring that the design and materials are of high quality.

Support and Strengthen Communities

Newry City Centre has a high residential population living within a 10 to 15 minutes walk away. Some of these communities are amongst the most disadvantaged in the city. It is therefore fundamentally important that in developing new projects, the potential for them to be of benefit to local residents is fully understood and realised.

This could be through the development of uses of value to local people, local job creation, or by ensuring good physical connections to, from and through the site in relation to residential areas. It is also about ensuring that local people are involved in the decision making process whenever feasible.

Animate Newry through Appropriate Mixed Use Development

Successful city centres are those that have a good mixture of uses, within local areas and within buildings themselves. This helps to sustain physical, social and economic activity levels throughout the day, evening and weekends, making them safer and avoiding areas becoming 'dead' or at worse 'no go zones' during certain periods. Uses must, of course be compatible with one another, with sensitivity to the needs of different users and occupants.



Ensure Frontage onto Good Quality Public Space



Support and Strengthen Communities



Animate through Appropriate Mixed Use Development

4.3 PUBLIC REALM

Public realm is a term used to describe outdoor areas that are accessible to the public, including parks and squares, but also streets, car parks and other more incidental spaces. Given its extent the design of public realm has a major influence on how a city centre both looks and functions. Good quality public realm enables people to move with ease throughout the city, it provides the context for the myriad of physical, social and economic activities that take place in a successful city centre and it sends out a positive message to all about how their city is valued. As public realm will be key feature of this masterplan, some key principles must be adopted in Newry.

Investment in Quality

It is essential that public realm is viewed as a long term and sustainable investment and not a quick fix that will deteriorate quickly.

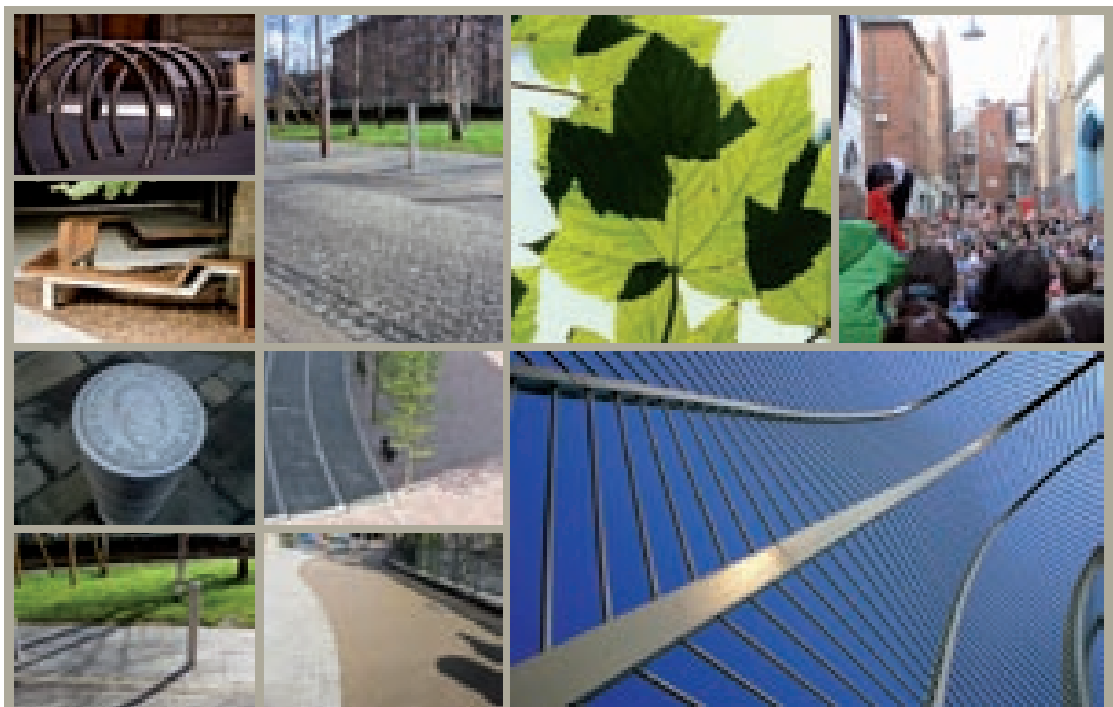
With the use of high quality materials and construction techniques, good public realm should only improve with age.

Simplicity of Design

City centre spaces can quickly become cluttered with objects, such as bollards, traffic signs and light columns. Public realm should be designed with simplicity at its core, thereby limiting visual clutter and keeping spaces safe and flexible for a wide range of potential uses.

Proactive Management

Maximising the contribution good public realm makes to a city requires innovative and proactive management. Outdoor events both large and small can make a major impact on a city centre, stimulating significant social and economic activity of benefit to all.



4.4 PUBLIC ART

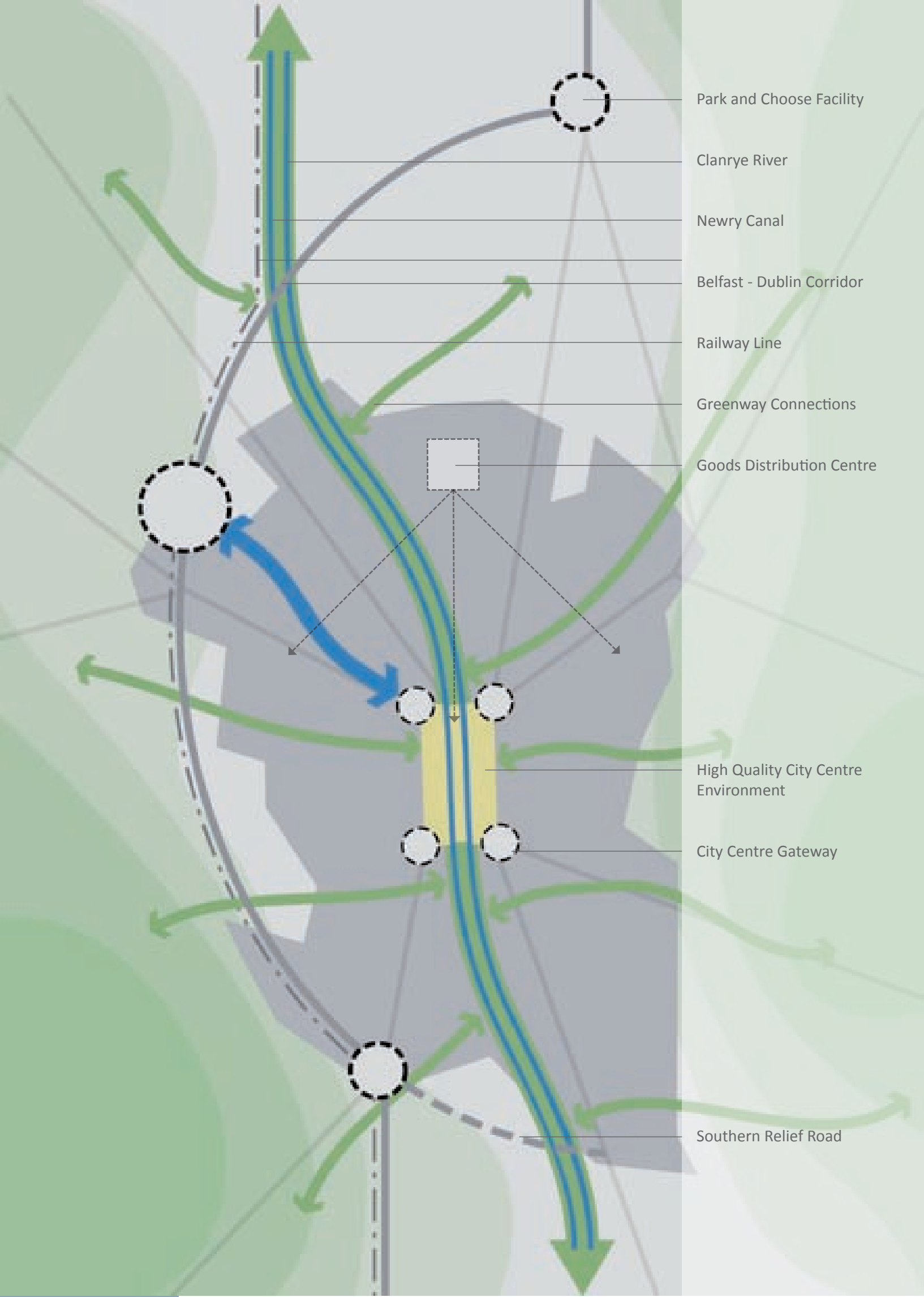
Public Art is another special ingredient of a successful city centre. A variety of public art initiatives, ranging from permanent sculptures, temporary installations to performances can help to reinforce distinctiveness and bring the city alive for the enjoyment of all who live, work or visit there. In Newry a strategically coordinated approach to public art would help to identify opportunities across the city and to maximise their beneficial impact for the city centre as a whole.

Selecting the right type of public art intervention must be based on an understanding of the physical and social dynamics of the city centre, as well as the practicalities of funding. For example, large sculptures can be costly, which if not of scaled and positioned correctly can have limited impact or value.

Often smaller, more incidental sculptures can make a big difference, operating on a personal level with the people who experience them. Ephemeral public art should also feature in the life of the city centre, be it an outdoor exhibition, a work of installation art or a performance taking place in a public space or street.

Importantly public art must have relevance to the people and the place for which is intended. Local artists, children and other members of the community should be involved as much as possible in the process of commissioning art for Newry.





5. CITY WIDE PROPOSALS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Whilst this is a masterplan for Newry City Centre, the fortunes of the city and its centre are clearly intertwined. The masterplan therefore proposes in concept, a number of major city wide initiatives for further consideration. Whilst all are of a significant scale and therefore have cost implications, their delivery would be of major benefit to Newry as a whole, enabling its centre to more easily fulfil its potential.



5.2 NEWRY'S SETTING

Analysis identified that the physical setting of Newry is a key contributor to its distinctive identity and in particular, that due to their visual prominence, the slopes of valleys are sensitive to inappropriate development. It is therefore proposed that a policy to afford a degree of protection to the setting of Newry's City Centre is developed. This would require the preparation of guidelines for development taking place within a designated zone of high visual impact.

Importantly, such an approach should not stifle development from taking place in appropriate locations. Instead it should provide positive guidance on design aspects, such as siting, building height and roofscape design. Major applications or proposals for sites in particularly prominent locations should require a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, so that views from the City Centre can be accurately assessed to inform the decision making process.

Delivery of such an initiative would entail close liaison with DOE Planning Service and integration of this policy with existing planning provisions.

5.3 THE NEWRY CANAL

As the first summit canal of the British Isles, the Newry Canal is a national, if not international heritage asset. Furthermore, it has grown in value as an ecological and recreational resource, with its towpath being recorded as one of Northern Ireland's most visited attractions.

It is therefore of significant value to the city of Newry to support proposals to reopen the Newry Canal to boat traffic. This would involve the reconnection of Lough Neagh with Carlingford Lough, thereby reinstating a major connection in the growing network of navigable waterways across Ireland and Europe.

Benefits to Newry and its city centre would be widespread. An influx of visitors using the canal would bring additional economic activity to the city centre. As the largest settlement along its route, it would particularly benefit Newry's hospitality and retail sectors, adding a surge of people along its length.



The passage of boats and use of city centre locks would also create a spectacle in the heart of Newry, being itself an attraction to visitors and locals alike. Work to the canal would also include refurbishment of its towpath, thereby enhancing its suitability for walkers, runners and cyclists.

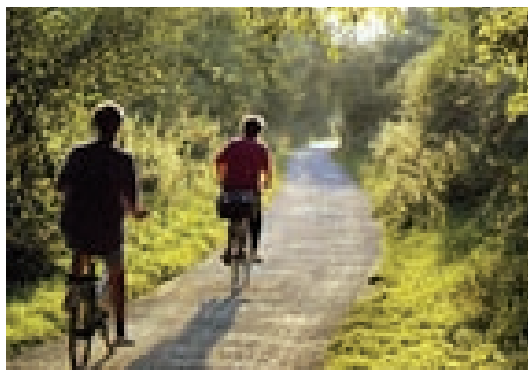
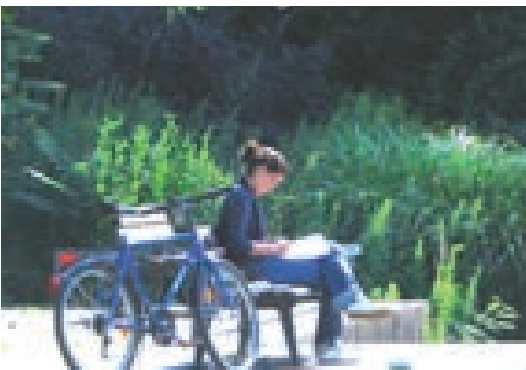
The phased delivery of this project would require significant allocations of funding, drawn from a number of different sources. Yet its projected benefits and international significance as a piece of tourism infrastructure, means that opening up of the Newry Canal should be capable of attracting central and European government funding.

5.4 THE NEWRY SUPER GREENWAY

The existence of the Newry Canal and Clanrye River running through the centre of Newry makes it uniquely suited to a comprehensive network of foot and cycle paths. These paths or Greenways present a real opportunity to link the majority of Newry's neighbourhoods with one another and with the city centre.

The benefits of such a system would be considerable. It would encourage many more people in the city to walk or cycle to and from the city centre, thereby reducing road congestion, improving air quality and greatly contributing to the health and fitness of the city's population.

Delivery of such a project is well suited to an incremental process, gradually extending and upgrading existing connections over time.



5.5 SOUTHERN RELIEF ROAD

Congestion levels in Newry City Centre are a major cause for concern and risk seriously stemming its ability to develop as a more prosperous city centre. A key strategic project to alleviate this situation is the Southern Relief Road.

The Southern Relief Road is an established proposal to link the Warrenpoint Road with the A1 bypass via a bridge across the Clanrye River, south of the city centre. In the 2009 feasibility report produced to explore the viability of this proposal, it was found that whilst environmental and engineering challenges would be presented, this link would deliver “*significant economic benefits*” to the City Centre.

Delivery of this project should be explored through public private partnership, being of direct benefit to Warrenpoint Port and major city developments such as the Albert Basin.

5.6 ARRIVAL EXPERIENCE

In a competitive environment where shoppers, tourists and business investors have many choices of destination, it is important that Newry ensures a positive arrival experience to all who visit. Furthermore, congestion on approach roads means that the city requires alternatives to more efficiently connect the city centre with regional transport infrastructure of the M1 and railway station.

It is therefore proposed that Park and Choose Facilities are developed at three key locations on the Newry Bypass. These would involve the expansion of existing Park and Ride facilities at Sheepbridge, Newry Railway Station and Cloghogue, and the provision of frequent and convenient rapid transit between them and the city centre. A fleet of ultra modern, low emission electric buses operating on designated routes would transform the ease with which people access Newry City Centre.

Delivery of these projects could also be achieved through private means with public sector support, with city centre businesses benefiting from the system which could run as a commercially profitable enterprise.

5.7 FREIGHT DISTRIBUTION CENTRE

The impact of heavy goods vehicles (HGV) in Newry City Centre is a persistent problem, largely associated with port traffic passing through on its way to and from Warrenpoint Harbour. HGV traffic is also generated by service deliveries to city centre businesses, including large articulated lorries.

It is therefore proposed to establish a local freight distribution system for Newry City Centre. This would involve an intermediary depot being located on the edge of the city, close to transport connections. This facility would then provide a point at which goods are transferred from large lorries to smaller, low emission vehicles. Such a centre would contribute significantly to the reduction of HGV traffic and emissions in the City Centre.

Delivery of this project could be achieved through initial public investment followed by private sector operation of the centre and delivery system.

5.8 CITY CENTRE GATEWAYS

A significant contributing factor to city centre congestion and the occupation of central parking spaces, are the vehicles of those who work in there. It is, of course, essential to the local economy that employees and business owners can access Newry City Centre with ease. However, it is counterproductive for business if their collective traffic movements are detrimental to the quality of the city centre.

The first step in reducing this problem is by providing viable alternative modes of transport. These include the Newry Super Greenway and the Arrival Experience rapid transit systems previously discussed.

Another initiative is the construction of purpose built car parks at key gateways on the edge of the city centre. These multi-storey car parks, integrated with mixed use development, would provide cost effective and convenient car parking at the main arrival points to the city centre. Electronic car parking signage should also be established along key approach routes, into the City Centre to provide motorists with live information on the number of available car parking spaces.

This would have the effect of ‘catching’ traffic before it accesses the city centre as well as helping to address the issue of vehicles circulating the city centre in search of spaces.

Delivery of this project would be led by the private sector, facilitated by the public sector in close cooperation with DRD Roads Service.



5.9 SUSTAINABILITY INITIATIVES

Newry Low Carbon City

“A smart city in which citizens, business and government sustainably live, work and interact, through delivery of integrated, low carbon products and services.”

This statement sets out the vision of Newry & Mourne District Council for the ongoing transformation of the city into a low carbon, energy efficient urban centre. The statement also reflects the theme of renewable energy and green technology enshrined in the Memorandum of Understanding between Newry and Mourne District Council and Louth Local Authorities who are jointly committed to reduce energy consumption, to promote the adoption of renewable technologies and help reduce carbon emissions.

Working with many partners from the public, private and community sectors, Newry & Mourne District Council have initiated a wide range of projects designed to fulfil the vision of a Low Carbon City. The delivery of these projects will make a major contribution to fulfilling the masterplan vision.

Newry Low Carbon City Charter

As a means of bringing together city stakeholders, a Newry Low Carbon Charter has been drafted. It requires organisations in the City to:

- use their best efforts to advance the project and all its constituent parts
- collaborate fully with the other participants in the project
- make appropriate resources available to support the project
- promote the project and the theme of sustainable energy that underlies it
- participate actively in the Newry, Low Carbon City Project

This Charter provides the basis for collaborative working across the city to pursue a sustainable future and its signing by key organisations is a crucial step for the City.



Newry Low Energy Zone

Newry City Centre has been designated as a Low Energy Zone with the following targets to be achieved by 2020.

- 20% of the heat required within the zone to be supplied from renewables.
- 20% of the electricity required within the zone to be supplied from renewables.
- And 40% greater energy efficiency in designated buildings.

This provides the basis for reducing the energy consumption for the city centre, thereby delivering significant environmental and economic benefits to the city. Delivering existing projects, plus many of those proposed in this Masterplan, will significantly contribute to reaching, if not surpassing these targets.

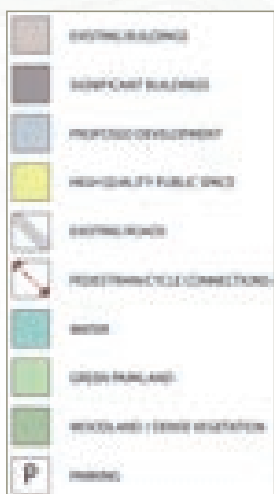
Plugged In Places

A key low carbon project for Newry is Plugged in Places, a UK Government initiative focussed on promoting the uptake of electric vehicles by providing funding to assist with pilot schemes to establish electric vehicle infrastructure. In Newry this will support the growth of low emission electric vehicles not only for use by private individuals, but also public transport operators and the council itself.

In addition, a number of other important sustainability projects are being pursued by the city, including an innovated Carbon Mapping web application, a Community Energy Scheme to greatly reduce energy emissions in the domestic sector and Smart City metering system to inform users of energy usage.

Newry is therefore at the forefront of national efforts to pursue a sustainable future. Delivery of these initiatives, in tandem with the proposals set out in this document, will be fundamental to realising a sustainable and healthy future for the city.





6. CITY CENTRE PROPOSALS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

The Newry City Centre Masterplan establishes a framework for development in the city centre over the next 10-15+ years. Rather than a proscriptive blueprint, the masterplan serves to identify projects and establish key principles for integrated development to realise physical, economic and social benefits for the city. Masterplan proposals are made for seven key areas of the City Centre

1. Waterfront

Creating a world class, city centre waterfront



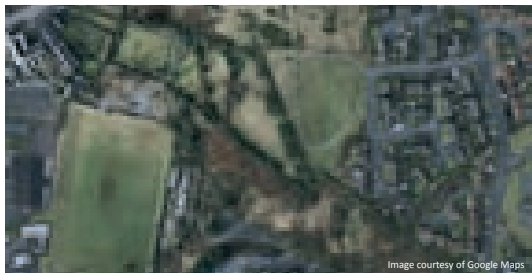
2. Sugar Island

Nurturing a unique, creative quarter



3. Four Parks

Establishing a new network of city parks



4. Hill Street and Abbey Way

Regenerating Newry's primary streets



5. Monaghan Street and Upper Edward Street

Revitalising key areas through health and education



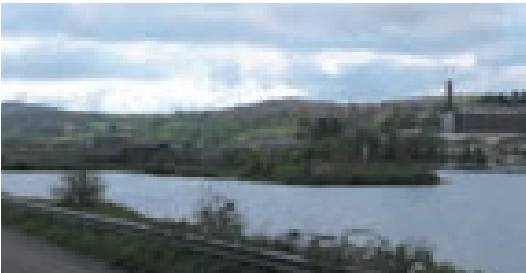
6. Buttercrane and The Quays

Integrating city centre retail



7. Albert Basin

Establishing A flagship city quarter

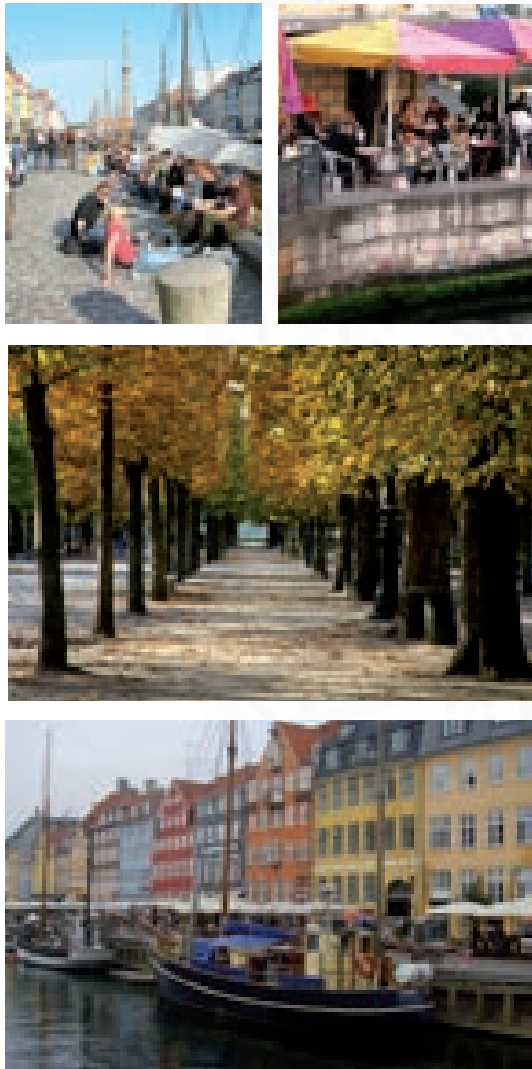


Short - Medium Term

- Environmental Improvements
- Foot and Cycle Paths and Bridges
- Active Frontages
- Green Parkland and Civic Space
- River Weir
- Urban Design Strategy

Medium - Long Term

- Re-opened waterways
- Carnbane to Warrenpoint Shuttle Service



6.2 WATERFRONT - *Creating a world class, city centre waterfront*

The Clanrye River and Newry Canal present an exceptional opportunity for the city. Together, these watercourses create a focal point to the city centre that is truly unique. The Masterplan proposes a comprehensive waterfront project to fully capitalise upon this asset, with the goal of realising substantial social, economic and environmental benefits for Newry and its centre. Newry Waterfront will span from Sugar Island in the north to Albert Basin in the south and include all buildings located along Merchant's Quay and the Mall and all open space located between them.

The success of the Waterfront will depend on a comprehensive and coordinated approach to the entirety of this area. At present, the area is divided into many separate subspaces, lacking cohesiveness as an identifiable waterfront. This stems from vacant and underused buildings, and the uses located along its length, creating physical and visual barriers to movement. Furthermore, the area is dominated by car parking, leaving very few areas for the enjoyment of people.

The proposed Waterfront would be realised by the phased delivery of four complementary projects. Firstly, a coordinated River Clean Up involving statutory agencies and voluntary bodies. Secondly, establishing a detailed plan for the entire area and comprehensive wall-to-wall redesign of the space between its buildings. Thirdly, the implementation of a weir to maintain water levels along the Clanrye River. And finally, the opening up of the Newry Canal to boat traffic, as part of the national connection between Lough Neagh and Carlingford Lough.

It also proposed that catalysed by these works, an incremental process of building redevelopment is facilitated along the waterfront, led by the private sector and informed by an urban design strategy.

River Clean Up (A1)

Like all city centre watercourses, the Clanrye River and Newry Canal are highly susceptible to litter and dumping. As a result, they are perceived by many as negative components of the city centre. It is therefore proposed to establish a River Clean Up programme, based on a long term strategy for maintenance of both water bodies.

To be successful this will require close cooperation and agreement between various agencies involved with the watercourses. This project should also involve the voluntary input of local people, thereby raising awareness and pride in these two important city assets.

Waterfront Park (A2)

A comprehensive plan for the Newry City Centre Waterfront would be the first step in transforming the area, the elements of which would be delivered in phases. A key component of this would be the relocation of car parking away from canal and riverside locations, thereby freeing up space for parkland and recreational use. Alternative parking locations would be identified as part of masterplan proposals for gateway locations.



River Weir (A3)

The Clanrye River flows from the foothills of the Mourne Mountains to Carlingford Lough. Being tidal, water levels fluctuate in the city centre, exposing its banks and making the water less visible from adjacent areas. It is therefore proposed to maintain high water levels through the implementation of a weir.

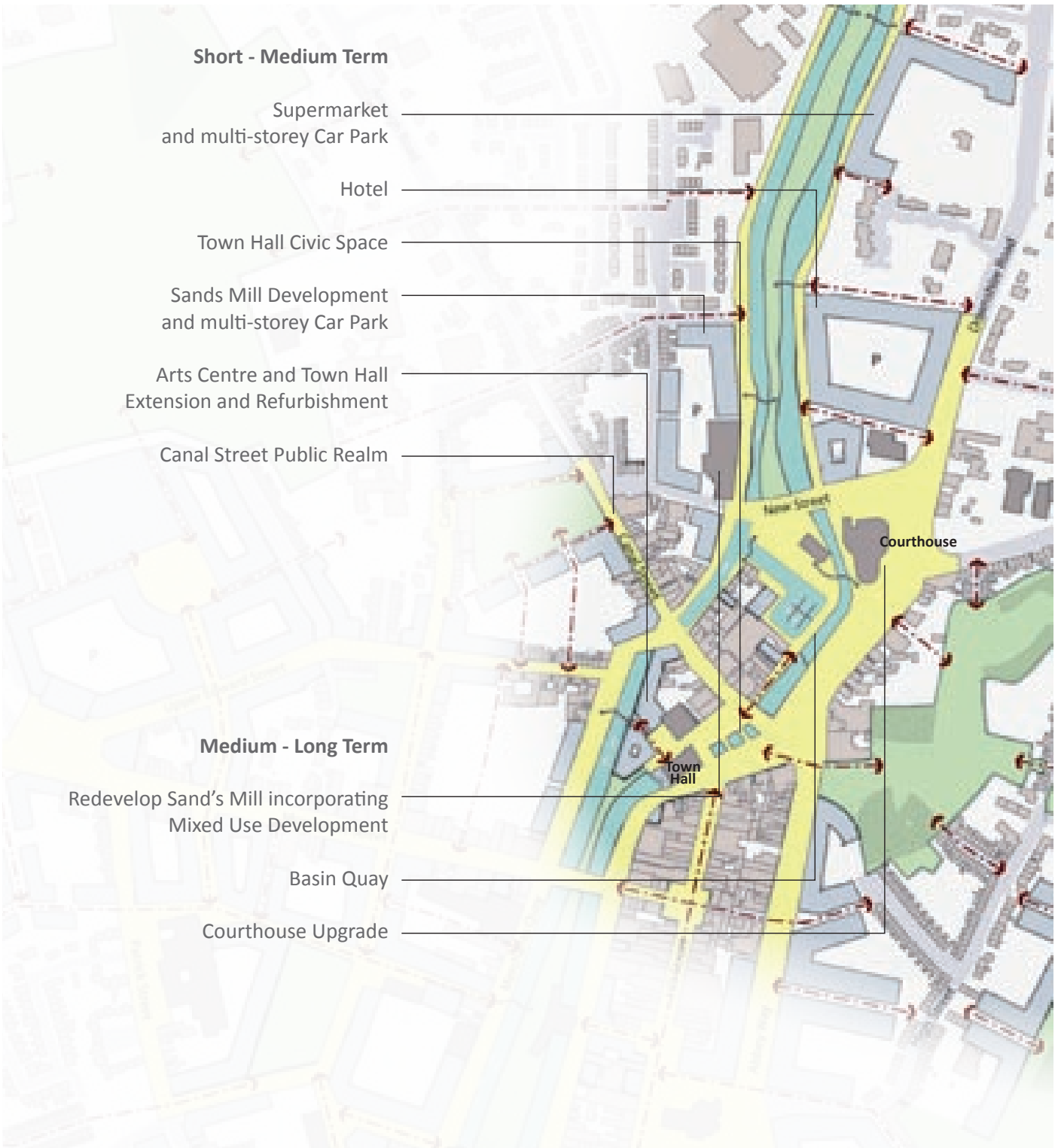
Canal Navigation (A4)

Reopening the Newry Canal to boat traffic would provide a major boost to the tourism economy of Northern Ireland. In Newry, challenges are posed by the number of low bridges across the water body. This project would therefore involve the implementation of locks and swing bridges to enable the passage of craft through the city centre.

Waterfront Urban Design Strategy (A5)

A projected impact of the Waterfront Park would be an increase in land values stimulating development activity, particularly in relation to vacant and underused buildings. Such investment would be broadly welcomed. However, it is proposed that robust urban design guidance is set in place through a strategy, to ensure that new buildings are of appropriate scale and character, contributing positively to the development of the Waterfront and wider city centre..





Short - Medium Term

Supermarket
and multi-storey Car Park

Hotel

Town Hall Civic Space

Sands Mill Development
and multi-storey Car Park

Arts Centre and Town Hall
Extension and Refurbishment

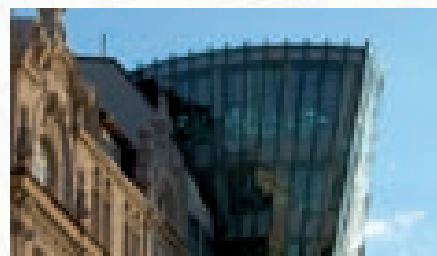
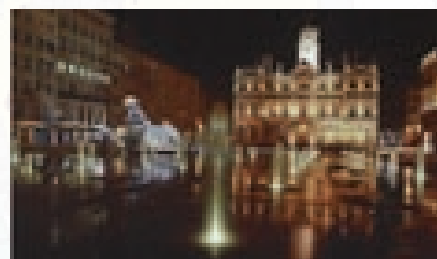
Canal Street Public Realm

Medium - Long Term

Redevelop Sand's Mill incorporating
Mixed Use Development

Basin Quay

Courthouse Upgrade



6.3 SUGAR ISLAND - *Nurturing a unique, creative quarter*

The very name Sugar Island conjures up an exoticism, with strong roots in the merchant history of Newry. The island is an important gateway to the City Centre from the north and home to key civic buildings such as the Town Hall, Arts Centre and nearby Court House. However, its identity has been obscured by vacant sites, inappropriate development and a dominance of vehicles. Through the masterplan, it is therefore proposed to help Sugar Island rediscover its special identity through a series of projects, building on the success of the recently implemented Canal Street public realm.

Newry Town Hall and Setting (B1)

Designed by William Batt in 1893, Newry Town Hall is an architectural highlight of the city centre and an icon that represents Newry as a whole. Its dramatic central position over the Clanrye River, designed to straddle the Armagh / Down County border, gives the building and Sugar Island a particularly unique character. Yet the demands of modern day civic life mean that the Town Hall and its environs lack space and flexibility to hold public events. Furthermore, the growth of Newry has meant that the building now 'turns its back' on much of the city centre.

It is therefore proposed to add a flagship extension to the rear of Newry Town Hall. This would provide new, flexible space in which to hold public events, whilst giving the Town Hall a far stronger physical relationship with the entire city centre. Its architecture would be required to be of the highest possible quality, procured through an international design competition.

The use of contemporary materials such as glass and steel should be considered, thereby contrasting with the historic brick building, with potential to reveal the river flowing underneath from within the building.

In addition, it is proposed to create a new civic square at the front of the Town Hall. This would establish an important civic space at the heart of the city centre, suitable for small to medium sized civic events. Creation of the square would involve partial removal of walls and decking across part of the Clanrye River, carefully designed to retain the dramatic relationship of the Town Hall with the river. This new space would confidently mark the centre of the city and become the natural venue of important civic events.

Arts Centre and Associated Development (B2)

The Sean Hollywood Arts Centre is a hub of cultural activity in Newry and one of the very few such venues in the City Centre. As vacant or underused lands surround the Arts Centre, it is proposed that a mixed-use development is taken forward to provide good quality canal side residential accommodation that also incorporates a modernised and extended arts centre. The development should play to the strengths of this waterside location, providing flexible exhibition space and involving the input of the local arts community in its development. A public path along the canal should be instated as part of the development.

Sands Mill (B3)

Sands Mill is another architectural landmark in this area. Whilst recent frontage restoration work is to be commended, all windows and doors of the building are blocked, resulting in an inanimate street frontage and antisocial behaviour, signalled by persistent graffiti. It is proposed to work with the Mill owners to examine the feasibility of reactivating key parts of this landmark building. This could include mill related retail on the ground floor and office space on upper storeys. Alternatively, longer term relocation of the mill operation to a purpose built, modernised facility elsewhere in the city could be explored, enabling a more comprehensive redevelopment of the site.

Gateway Development (B4)

At the time of writing, two separate proposals are in existence for a hotel and supermarket on the former petrol station site and lorry depot. Through the masterplan, it is advocated that these are advanced following the best practice design principles in Chapter 5, including active frontages onto surrounding streets. It is also proposed that a multi-storey car park forms a central part of this development, serving onsite uses and the wider city centre.

Basin Quay (B5)

It is proposed to reinstate Basin Quay in the northern part of Sugar Island as a long term component of the newly opened Newry Canal. Historic maps clearly show that the basin was a focal point of the area which still retains many of its historic buildings.

The project would involve re-excavation of the car park to create a marina for boats using the canal, relocating car parking to the nearby gateway development. It would also involve the restoration of historic buildings, introducing cafes, bars, restaurants on ground floors and residential and office space on upper storeys. The result would be a lively focal point to Sugar Island, helping to ensure that the north of the city centre benefits from the proposed canal re-opening.

Whilst reinstating the basin is a longer term project for the city centre, Phase 1 should involve the restoration of derelict buildings on Sugarhouse Quay. This initiative must be seen as a priority for the City, as the loss of these structures would constitute a further erosion of Newry's built heritage.

Courthouse Integration (B6)

Located at the junction of Downshire Road and New Street, the Newry Courthouse provides Magistrates, County and Crown courts for the area. Ongoing security concerns have necessitated the construction of large blast walls and fencing around the building. These have a negative impact on the aesthetics and activation of this prominent gateway location. Whilst it is recognised that security risks remain high at present, it is proposed that the need for these structures is kept under constant review by Courts Service. The ultimate goal for Newry should be either the removal or the significant reduction of these defences. This would result in a greater physical and visual integration of the building with its surroundings and be representative of the peaceful future to which all in the city aspire.

Short - Medium Term

Heather Park Enhancement

Kilmorey Park Enhancement

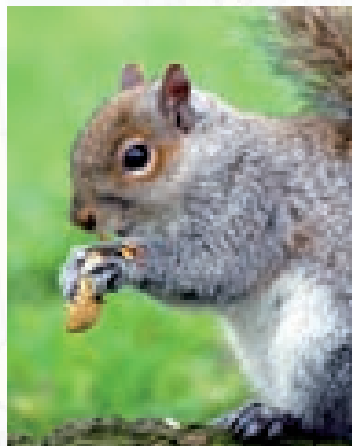
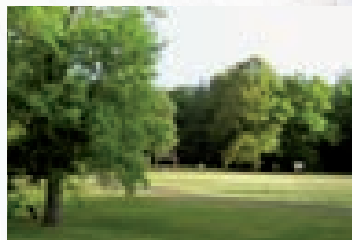
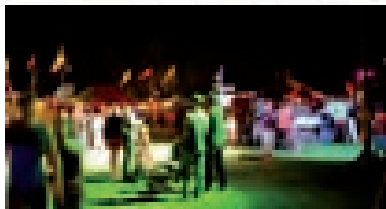
Listed Building Restoration

The Rocks and Castle Ruins Enhancement

Abbey Grounds Public Park

Park Frontage Development

Pitch Maintenance



6.4 FOUR PARKS - *Establishing a new network of city parks*

Whilst analysis highlighted a lack of green open space in the City Centre, aerial photography clearly shows that green space does exist in relative proximity. The Masterplan proposes improved linkages and coordinated enhancements to the three parks of Heather Park, Kilmorey Park and The Rocks, plus the creation a new, larger public park as part of the redeveloped grounds of the former Abbey Grammar School. Designed and managed together with the input of local residents, these spaces present an excellent opportunity to enhance green open space provision for Newry City Centre.

Heather Park (C1)

Heather Park is tucked behind buildings on Trevor Hill. It is largely hidden from view, making it vulnerable to antisocial behaviour. The park's position on Gallows Hill where public hangings traditionally took place, should be the catalyst to its improvement. An archaeological excavation should be commissioned to uncover the significance of this role, including a tunnel reputed to have connected the park with Newry Courthouse. This should be followed by the development of a park plan with local residents, likely to feature improved gateways, paths and planting, as well as signage and public art to interpret the park's history. Should the tunnel be in condition worthy of restoration, it should be opened as a tourist attraction.

Kilmorey Park (C2)

Kilmorey Park and the neighbouring churchyard of St Patrick's Church occupy a bell shaped area of land between Stream Street, Cowan Street and Church Street. The land slopes steeply from the south giving it an attractive setting with the church tower a prominent feature on the skyline.

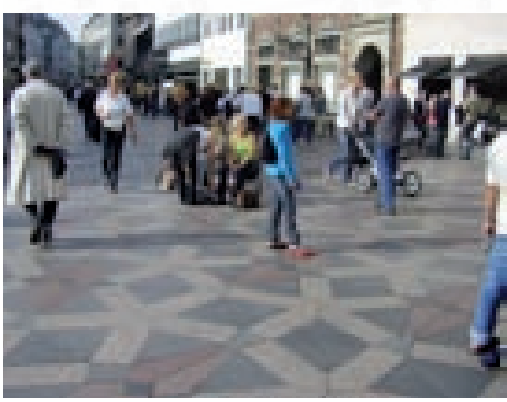
By working with local residents and St Patrick's Church, a coordinated plan for improvements to the park should be advanced. This would likely include interpretation of the graveyards historical significance and new play facilities for the use of local people.

The Rocks (C3)

The Rocks is a large area of sloping land to the south east of Newry city centre, located to the rear of residential areas. It consists of naturalised grassland, punctuated by a rocky outcrop upon which ruins are located. Whilst under private ownership, The Rocks is criss-crossed with informal paths, used by local people for dog walking and as pedestrian short cut. A coordinated plan for The Rocks should be developed with local residents to formalise its role as a public park, maintaining its rugged qualities and historic and ecological value.

Abbey Grounds (C4)

The Abbey Christian Brother's Grammar School moved to new premises in 2010, leaving behind a large site to the east of Newry City Centre. This presents an excellent opportunity to establish a major new park for Newry, as part of a comprehensive, mixed use development of the wider area. Proposals should be advanced through a site masterplan that adopts principles of this Masterplan and ensures good quality pedestrian connections with the city centre and surrounding areas. The park has scope to provide sports facilities, woodland walks and events spaces, whilst adjacent development could provide a mixture of residential and commercial uses, with potential for a public sector hub or high quality hotel in this location.



6.5 HILL STREET AND ABBEY WAY - *Regenerating Newry's primary streets*

Hill Street (including John Mitchell Place) is the principal street of Newry. It is lined with many established independent retailers, high street chains, banks, the library and the Newry Variety Market. It also home to the Cathedral of St Patrick and St Colman and the First Presbyterian and St Mary's churches. It is therefore essential to Newry City Centre that its main street functions as well as possible.

To the east of Hill Street is Abbey Way, a dual carriageway constructed in the 1960s to bring traffic through the city. The route plays an important role in the current traffic movement of Newry. Yet its design has impacted negatively upon the surrounding area, presenting a barrier to east / west movement and a constraint to the development of adjacent lands.

The City Centre Masterplan therefore proposes a number of projects to improve this central part of the city, encompassing both Hill Street and Abbey Way.

Hill Street Public Realm (D1)

Hill Street is a relatively successful shopping venue, with few vacant units and many established retailers. But challenging trading conditions and competition from other areas means that improvements are required to ensure its sustainability. As well as supporting retail, this must also include a diversification of uses to make the area safe and active after hours.

A key component in addressing these issues on Hill Street is its public realm. At present the shopping experience is compromised by narrow footpaths, poor quality street furniture and a dominance of vehicles, be they parked on either side of the road or queued in traffic along its centre. Despite the best efforts of its retailers, shoppers are discouraged from spending more time on the street due to a lack of circulation space, seating and concerns for road safety.

It is therefore proposed that a comprehensive public realm project is delivered for Hill Street and adjacent spaces. This presents an opportunity to greatly enhance the quality of the street through natural stone paving, bespoke designed street furniture and public art. These should be designed to minimise street clutter and facilitate outdoor events. The project should also seek to readdress the balance between pedestrians and vehicles, so to create a safer and more attractive environment whilst maintaining vehicular access and on street parking where space permits. The quality of lighting should also be addressed, ensuring that Hill Street is safe and attractive during the hours of darkness.



Hill Street Development (D2)

In addition to the public realm, several buildings along Hill Street and surrounding streets are in need of refurbishment or in some cases, redevelopment. This presents an opportunity to provide modernised retail space, as well as introducing other compatible on upper floors, including office space and apartments.

The opportunity should also be taken to improve the overall appearance of the area through a coordinated programme of frontage improvements. Developed with the participation of business owners, this would include a coordinated colour scheme for buildings, the replacement of unsightly or inappropriate fixtures and the coordination of signage.

Newry Variety Market (D3)

The Newry Variety Market has existed on John Mitchell Place for over a century, with a substantial upgrade of its facilities taking place recently. It continues to operate two days a week, offering a diverse range of goods from fresh fruit and vegetables, to clothes and furniture. Successful markets contribute greatly to the vitality of city centres, offering a unique choice of product to consumers and an attraction to visitors.

The market should therefore be supported and developed to become a more commercially viable and attractive proposition to shoppers and visitors alike. A focus on good quality, locally sourced produce should be pursued with an overall aim of raising the quality of offer. Potential for market stalls to animate adjacent public spaces should be also explored, with particular opportunities associated with the proposed City Waterfront Park (A2).



Cathedral Setting (D4)

The Cathedral of St Patrick and St Colman is the most prominent landmark in Newry and the centre of the Roman Catholic diocese of Dromore. It was designed by local architect Thomas Duffy and completed in 1829 using locally quarried granite. In addition to its ongoing religious functions, the building and its grounds are a tourism attraction, in a role which should be encouraged where feasible. The ongoing upkeep of the Cathedral should be augmented by enhancements to the Cathedral gardens, making them usable for outdoor worship and a place of respite for the public. Potential to link through the space to a newly configured Abbey Way should also be explored.

William Street Development (D5)

At the corner of William Street and John Mitchell Place is the Newry and Mourne Health & Social Services Clinic. This important facility is housed in outdated buildings and in need of comprehensive renewal. Furthermore, the prominence of the site is such that its appearance makes a poor contribution to the this part of the city.

It is therefore proposed to relocate this facility to a purpose built, state of the art Health and Well Being Centre. This would then enable this prominent site to be developed in a layout and design more fitting to its location. The development should be mixed use in nature, with potential for ground floor retail, office space, apartments or potentially a hotel.

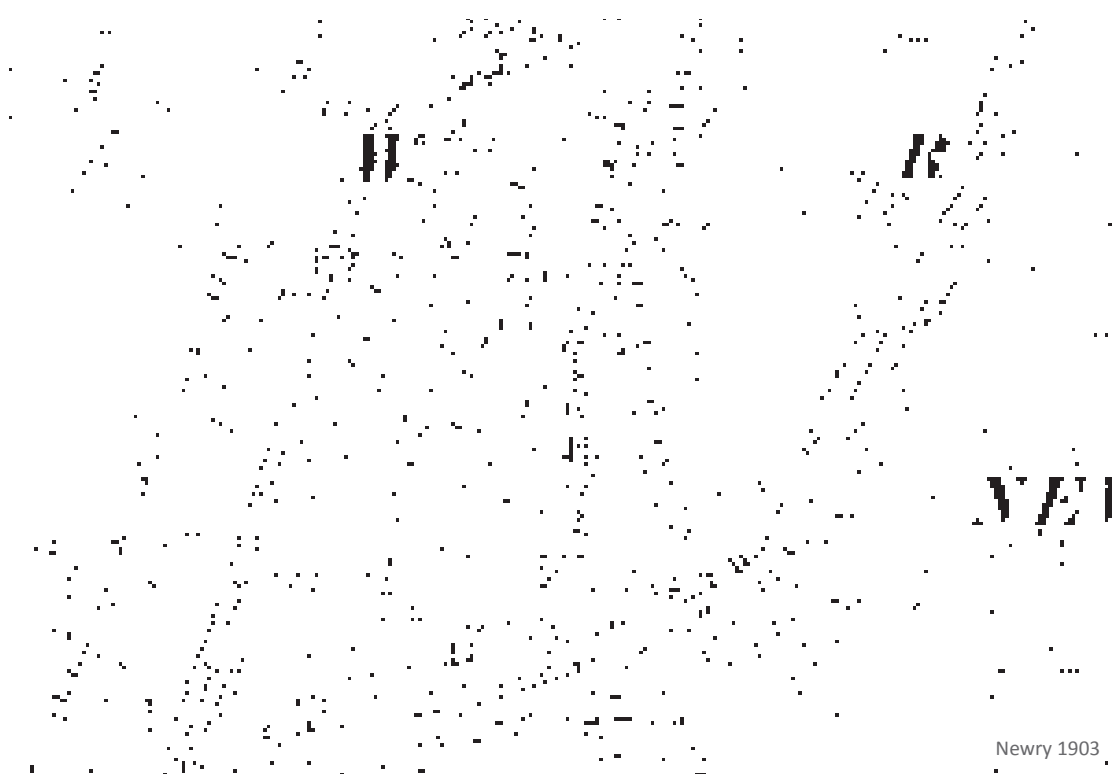
Abbey Way Streetscape (D6)

Abbey Way is a four lane dual carriageway that connects the north of Newry with the south and west. It was built in the 1960's to bypass Hill Street and to this day serves an important route for traffic accessing the city centre and passing through to and from Warrenpoint and Kilkeel.

Unfortunately for Newry, the town paid a heavy toll for the construction of this route, which involved the whole scale demolition of its medieval street layout (see historical plan below). Today the route severs east / west pedestrian connections, particularly where the two carriageways are split across different levels. This barrier impacts on the ability of residents to access the centre by foot, whilst also limiting the development potential of areas to the east.

In the short to medium term, scope exists to improve the route through environmental improvement measures, such as tree planting and by improved surface crossing points. Yet the long term goal for Abbey Way should be a comprehensive redesign, turning it from a dual carriageway into a city centre street. This would become viable in conjunction with city wide traffic reduction proposals in Chapter 5. A faithful recreation of the narrow medieval streets that once existed there would be impractical.

However, scope exists to establish a broad street with frontage to either side, well proportioned footpaths, crossing points and street trees. Benefits would include far greater east/west connectivity and a much more appropriate setting for historic buildings such as the Castle and Cathedral.



Newry 1903

North Street Development (D7)

One Newry's most prominent development sites is that of the former North Street flats immediately parallel to Abbey Way. This sizeable area is excavated into the hill side, with large retaining walls to the rear. Its central location is ideally suited to a major mixed use scheme, incorporating residential, commercial and community uses, with car parking to the rear. The development should be carefully planned and designed to ensure active frontage is presented onto North Street, or through the comprehensive redesign of the route, onto Abbey Way itself.

Castle Setting (D8)

Located to the east of Abbey Way is Bagenal's Castle, a 16th Century structure that was rediscovered in 1996 during demolition of the former McCann's Bakery. Original plans and elevations of the Castle still survive in the National Archives and the building is of significant historical interest as it was built on the environs of 12th Century Cistercian Abbey. In recent years the ruins of Bagenal's Castle have been renovated with an contemporary interior and opened as a museum and tourist information centre.

Whilst the museum is an excellent addition to the education and tourism infrastructure of the city centre, it is compromised by a poor physical setting. Access to the museum is from the dual carriageway of Abbey Way and the car park of the adjacent supermarket.

It is therefore proposed to undertake a project to enhance the setting and access to Bagenal's Castle. This should involve Environmental Improvement measures in the vicinity of the building, plus a longer term programme to ensure that development of the surrounding area prioritises the setting and access to this important City Centre facility.

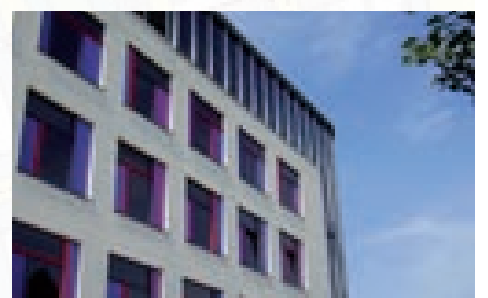
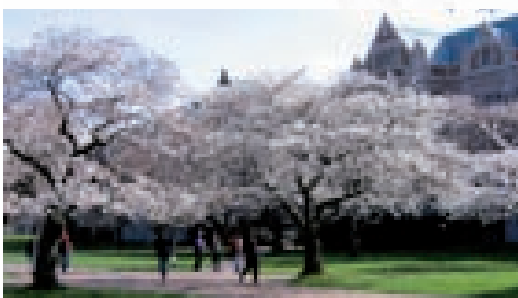
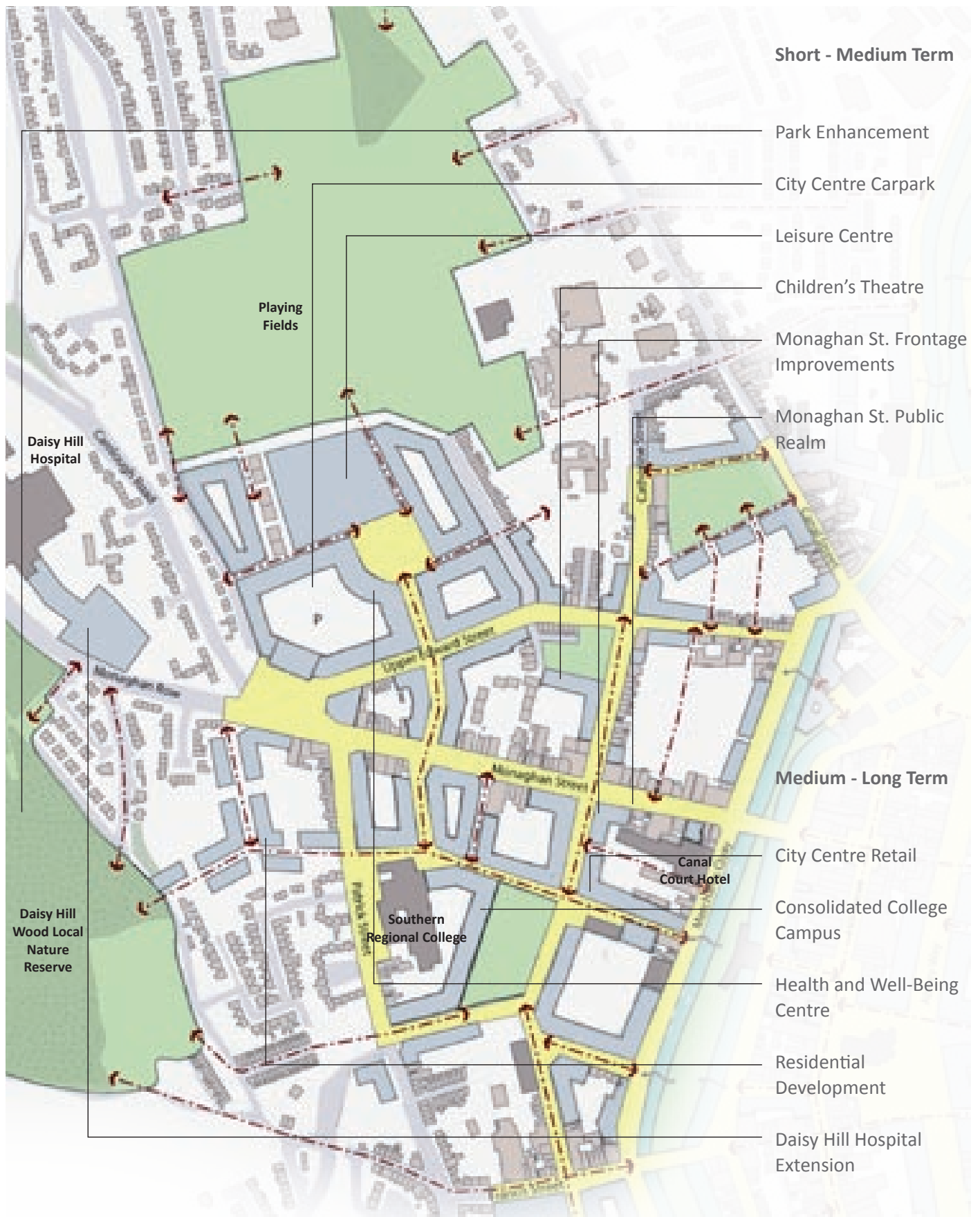
Abbey Yard Development (D9)

Abbey Yard is a prominent historic building located at the southern end of Abbey Way. It currently contains office and studio space, although like many properties in this area, has been compromised by the scale and character of the Abbey Way dual carriageway

As part of the wider redevelopment of this area, scope exists to develop this and adjacent buildings to provide good quality, mixed used accommodation. Potential uses include increased office and studio space, as well as apartments, galleries and other leisure, cultural and civic uses.

The site could also be considered as a candidate for a relocated Council Office, although would require to be taken forward with major improvement to pedestrian access (D5)

Development of this site must take into account the setting of Bagenal's Castle (D8), plus the need for positive active frontages onto the proposed park at Abbey Grounds (C4)



6.6 MONAGHAN STREET AND UPPER EDWARD STREET

- *Revitalising key areas through health and education*

To the west of the Newry Canal are Monaghan Street and Upper Edward Streets. Aerial photography (below) clearly illustrates the extent to which this part of the city centre is underdeveloped. Whilst Monaghan Street itself is lined with shops and other premises, behind lies an urban landscape of vacant buildings, surface car parks, depots and suburban style retail sheds.

The masterplan identifies a major opportunity to comprehensively regenerate this area. However, as its physical development capacity far outstrips forecasted commercial capacity, a number of these proposals will be for longer term consideration in line with market conditions.

Comprehensive Development Framework (E1)

The extent and complexity of development opportunities in this area will require the preparation of a comprehensive development framework.

This project would involve a process of detailed site analysis and consultation with the many different land and business owners in the area, resulting in a 'building by building' plan for the regeneration of the area

Monaghan Street Public Realm (E2)

A key first step in the regeneration of this area should be the improvement of Monaghan Street, a busy thoroughfare lined with shops and eateries. Narrow, uneven pavements and a dominance of parked cars greatly reduce the aesthetic appeal and functionality of the street. It is therefore proposed to introduce a high quality public realm of stone surfacing, bespoke street furniture and improved lighting. This would greatly benefit the street as place for pedestrians, which would in turn help to support its shops and other businesses.



Health and Leisure Quarter (E3)

To the north of Upper Edward Street is a large area of mostly publically owned land that is currently occupied by depots, sheds and vacant sites. It is proposed to comprehensively regenerate this area through health and leisure led development. This would involve the relocation of depots and other uses to more suitable locations elsewhere in the city.

Proposed uses would include a new leisure centre for the city, providing facilities for indoors sports and swimming, with playing fields to the north. The quarter would also include a new health village with a state of the art Health & Well Being Centre at its heart. This would provide a centralised space for GP surgeries, other primary healthcare functions and supporting uses. Finally, the quarter would include a major new car park, serving the western gateway to the city centre. All components should be designed together through an integrated site masterplan, based on a network of streets and public spaces.

Daisy Hill Hospital Extension (E4)

Daisy Hill is the region's main general hospital, serving a wide catchment area and employing many local residents. Its existence in Newry is very important for the city, which must continue to support its needs for growth and development. However, the high-rise building is situated on a restricted site, meaning it has little scope for expansion. This is exacerbated by limited space for car parking, impacting upon surrounding residential areas.

Next door to the Hospital on Monaghan Row are the main offices of Newry & Mourne District Council. Like the hospital, the council offices are hemmed in on a relatively small site for its needs. The building, both inside and out has become dated, with an impractical internal layout. Furthermore, the site is too small to accommodate all council functions, resulting in a spread of offices between this site and equally dated Greenbank Industrial Estate.

It is therefore proposed to consolidate both offices of Newry and Mourne District Council in a purpose built city centre facility. A number of potential locations exist for this building including the Albert Basin (see page 54) and the Abbey Grounds (see page 42). This would result in the Monaghan Row site being released for expansion of the Daisy Hill Hospital.

Daisy Hill Wood (E5)

To the immediate west of Newry City Centre is Daisy Hill Wood. It is owned and maintained by the Woodland Trust and was formally declared a Local Nature Reserve in 2010. It is proposed that by working with the Trust, the woodland is sensitively enhanced for wildlife conservation and public recreation as vital asset for the city. This would include a visitor strategy and comprehensive management plan, facilitating the involvement of local communities.

College Quarter (E6)

Southern Regional College is the largest further education college outside of Belfast, with a major presence in the west of Newry City Centre. Recent investments to modernise its facilities have greatly enhanced its capabilities, demonstrating a long term commitment to Newry.

As part of a long term vision, the masterplan proposes the establishment of one city centre campus in one location, consolidating all college facilities. Rather than set apart from the rest of the city behind a perimeter fence, the campus should be urban in character, integrated with public spaces and mixed used development, thereby creating a vibrant college quarter in the heart of Newry. Areas vacated by the college, which may eventually include Patrick Street, should be redeveloped for housing and other uses.

Catherine Street Development (E7)

A number of vacant sites currently exist in the Catherine Street area, with particularly prominent dereliction on the corner of Upper Edward Street through to Canal Street. It is proposed that appropriate mixed use development is taken forward for these sites, alongside the planned renewal of St Joseph's Convent Primary School. Potential exists to increase the resident population of this area, involving medium to high density residential development, open space and community facilities.

Corry Square Children's Theatre (E8)

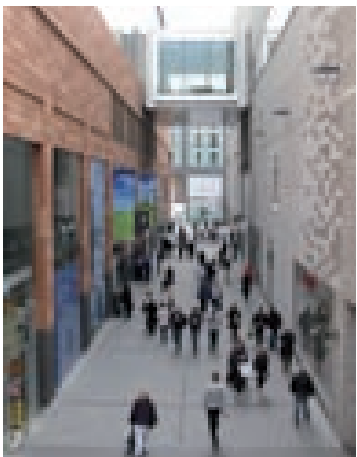
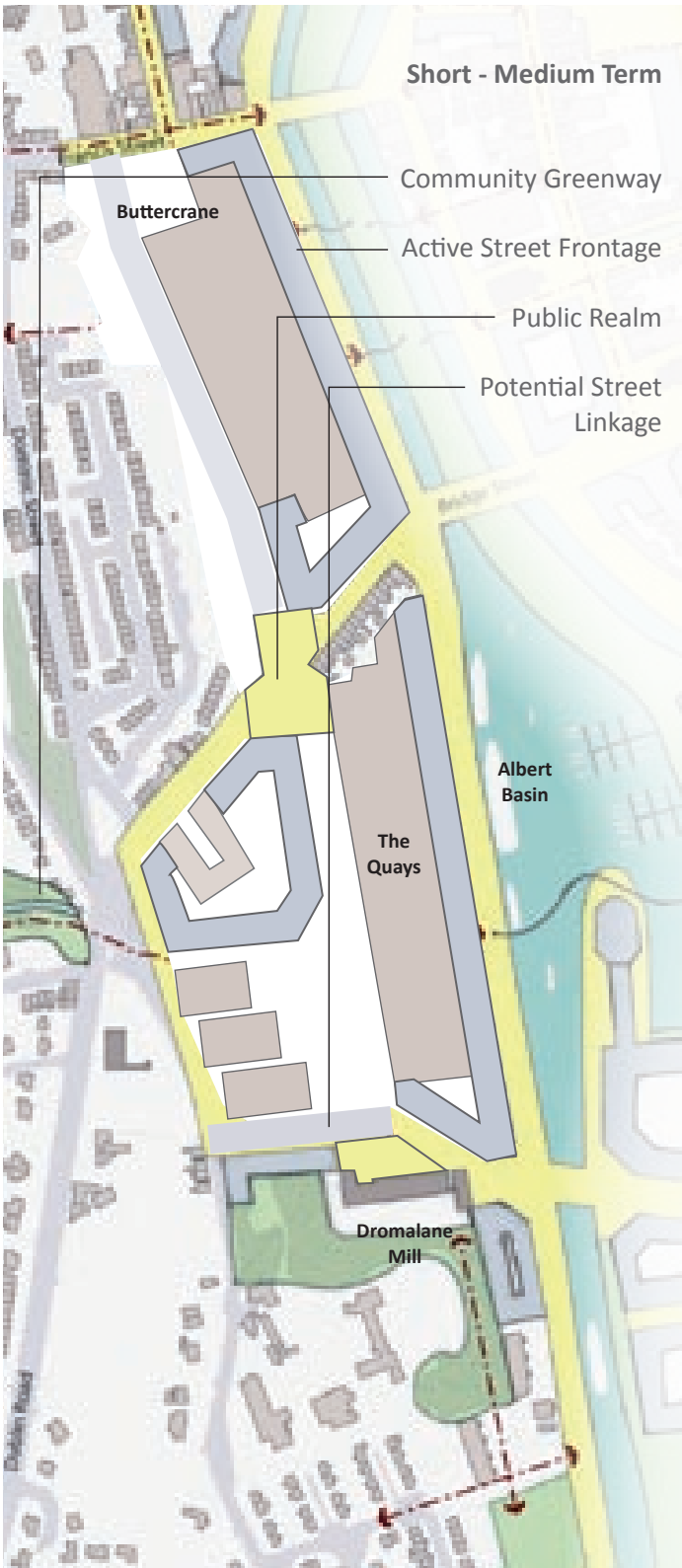
The former PSNI station on Corry Square has been earmarked for the development of a new Children's Theatre in Newry. This existing proposal is supported by the city centre masterplan, which identifies the potential of such a theatre to catalyse regeneration of the surrounding area. The theatre should be planned in conjunction with proposals for the nearby Sean Hollywood Arts Centre to ensure compatibility and minimise competition.

Corn Market Retail Development (E9)

The Corn Market area of Newry is home to a number of retail sheds, centred on an access road with surface car parks to either side. The suburban layout of this development is at odds with its city centre location, resulting in a poor quality pedestrian environment and large, blank facades onto the Canal. Future development of the Corn Market must be encouraged to adopt a higher density layout in keeping with its city centre location. Following development principles outlined in Chapter 5, this would include frontage onto streets, mixed use development of upper stories and concealed onsite parking, supplemented by offsite provision. The historic building within this development area should also be an integral component.

Railway Avenue Development (E10)

Finally, vacant sites to either side of Railway Avenue should be the subject of mixed use development, following best practice urban design principles. These sites present the opportunity to introduce good quality retail space on ground floors, with office and/or residential accommodation on upper storeys.



6.7 BUTTERCRANE AND THE QUAYS - *Integrating city centre retail*

Buttercrane and The Quays are two large and successful shopping centres located in the south west of the City Centre. Together they have made a significant impact on Newry as a retail destination, attracting shoppers from a wide catchment area. Yet the popularity of these centres has resulted in heavy traffic congestion in this part of the city. Evidence also suggests that many shoppers fail to visit other parts of the city centre. This highlights the potential benefits to Newry of integrating the Buttercrane and The Quays more effectively with the city centre as a whole. The masterplan therefore proposes short and long term proposals designed to fulfil this objective.

Linkages (F1)

Many shoppers visit both The Quays and Buttercrane centres, parking at one and visiting the other by foot. However, connections and road crossings between the two centres are currently poor. An environmental improvement project is therefore proposed to connect the two shopping centres more effectively, including widened footpaths and crossings, accompanied by pedestrian signage.

The masterplan also proposes a new street connection between Drumalane Road and the Warrenpoint Road, crossing the canal and river via two new road bridges. This link would help to dissipate traffic congestion experienced on Dublin Bridge, whilst opening up the Quays and Albert Basin to new development opportunities. The proposed canal bridge would include a lifting mechanism, thereby allowing the passage of boats to the basin and canal.

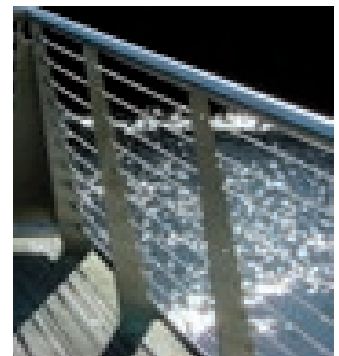
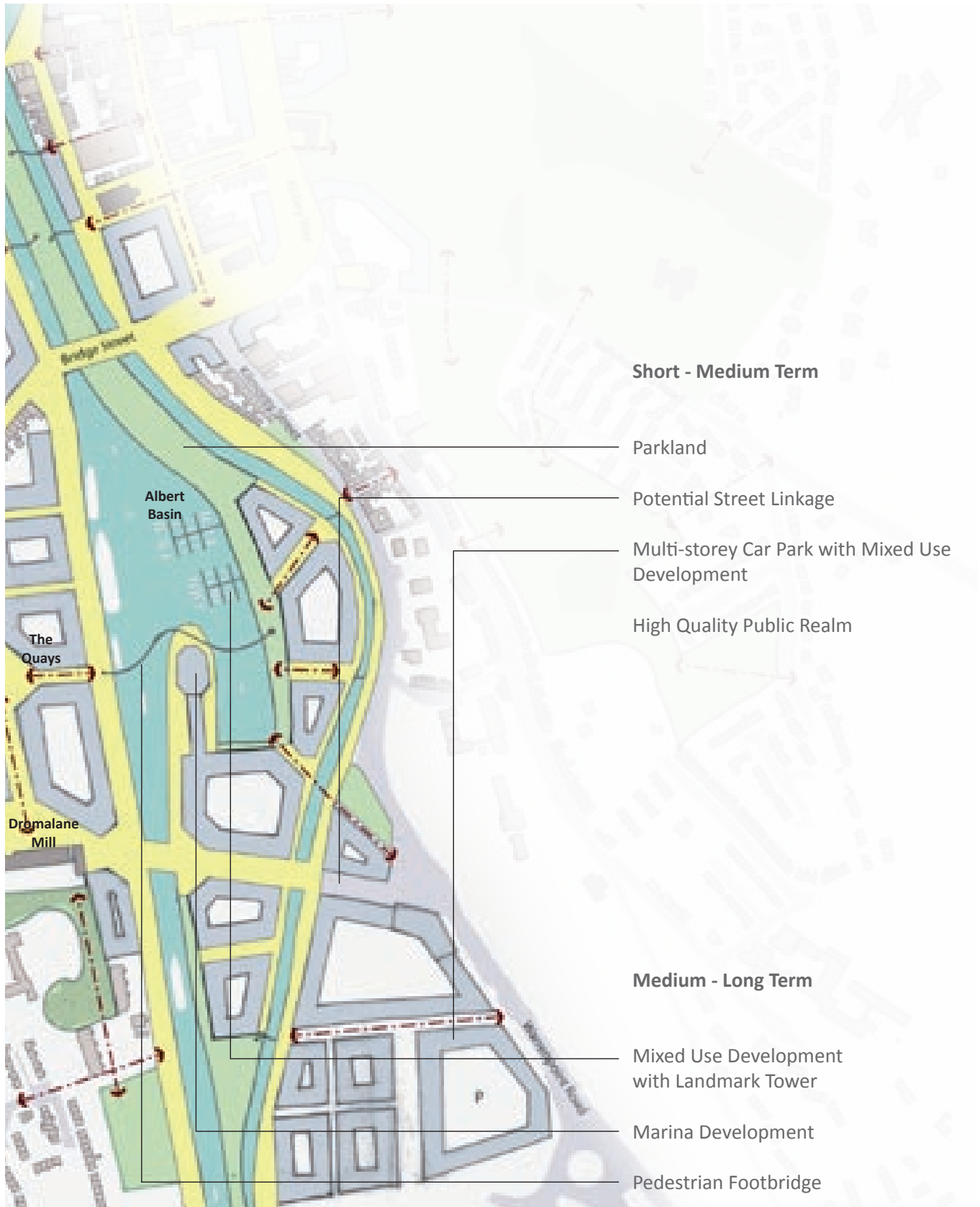
Short-Medium Term Development (F2)

Typical of 20th Century shopping centre design, both the Buttercrane and Quays have an internalised layout, focussed on a central indoor pedestrian mall, backing onto adjacent streets and spaces. The benefit of such a layout is to concentrate shopper footfall on a central circulation space around which units are focussed. However, this is of little benefit to the wider city centre environment, resulting in lengthy sections of inactive frontage along its unique waterfront.

It is therefore proposed to reconfigure and partially extend both shopping centres to the east, so to create a near continuous parade of shops along the canal and Albert Basin. This would involve a reduction in road widths and widening of footways. The benefits of this proposal will be prime waterfront retail space for both centres and a much livelier canal side for the city.

Long Term Development (F3)

The 21st century has seen a change in the way shopping centres are designed, moving away from the traditional layout of an internalised mall towards a more urban, street like configuration. This provides an opportunity to integrate the shopping centre more effectively with its urban context, whilst increasing mixed use floor space through the use of upper storeys. In Northern Ireland, the most well known example of this is Victoria Square in Belfast. It is therefore advocated that both of the Buttercrane and The Quays adopt a long term strategy to redevelop in this manner. For Newry City Centre, the impact of such development combined with City Waterfront and Albert Basin proposals, would be transformational.





6.8 ALBERT BASIN - *Establishing a flagship city quarter*

The Albert Basin marks the southern most extent of Newry City Centre and presents a considerable brownfield regeneration opportunity in its own right. The area was once a busy port surrounded by warehousing, factories and railway lines. But the decline of industry and growth of Warrenpoint Harbour led to its eventual decline, resulting to the cleared brownfield site we see today. The six hectare development site on Middlebank Island is situated between the canal and river, representing one of the most unique waterfront development sites on the island of Ireland. It is therefore essential for Newry that its development is progressed in a manner that maximises its regeneration potential for the benefit of the city, its residents and businesses.

Albert Basin (G1)

The City Centre Masterplan illustrates an indicative layout of this area. As with all proposals contained within this document, this should not be viewed as a blueprint for development. It serves, however, to illustrate key principles that will help to ensure the Albert Basin development contributes positively to Newry City Centre. In addition to the vision, aims and principles of the masterplan, the following objectives should be attained for Albert Basin.

A Place for the People of Newry –

The Albert Basin belongs to Newry, even if few people can access the land at present. Inappropriate development could result in it becoming an exclusive part of the city, frequented only by those who live or work there. In order to spread the regeneration benefits of such a development, the Albert Basin must be an inclusive place.

This will be achieved by implementing permeable connections through the site, including the proposed street linking Drumalane Road and Warrenpoint Road, Rapid Transit connections to Warrenpoint and the continuation of the Canal towpath. Inclusivity will also be achieved through a commitment to mixed use. Whilst a clear opportunity exists for the ‘traditional’ waterfront uses of apartments, offices and bars, the site should also accommodate civic amenities, such as the relocated offices of Newry and Mourne District Council.

A Celebration of the Past –

The history of Newry and the Albert Basin is a precious commodity, particularly when the majority of original structures in this area have been lost. Redevelopment presents an opportunity to celebrate the history of this unusual site through retention of any remaining industrial artefacts and reanimation of the water through the construction of a marina and mooring facilities.

A Commitment to a Sustainable Future –

The Albert Basin gives Newry an ideal opportunity to put into practice the latest thinking on sustainable development. The site should be designed to minimise its impact upon the environment. This should, for example, include the use of alternative energy sources, sustainably sourced building materials, Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) and good provision for pedestrians, cyclists and public transport.





7. TRANSFORMING NEWRY - DELIVERY OF THE MASTERPLAN

7.1 INTRODUCTION

The Newry City Centre Masterplan has illustrated the clear need for regeneration and the substantial opportunities that exist for comprehensive development. One of the most pressing challenges now facing Newry is how to deliver this transformation, so to realise the social, economic and environmental benefits that it can bring.

Limited availability of funding in the short to medium term from both public and private sectors remains a reality at the time of compiling this masterplan. The masterplan has also identified an imbalance between the substantial physical capacity of brownfield sites in the city centre and the much lower capacity of the current property market to take this extent of development forward.

These circumstances therefore place an onus on well-organised and strategically coordinated delivery structure to a) allocate limited resources wisely that will catalyse further regeneration, and b) vigorously market the city and its vision for the future to attract further investment. This will be an ongoing and collaborative process, which itself should contribute to the regeneration of the city.

This section outlines a strategy for that process, including a Place Marketing Strategy, Action Plan for the delivery of projects, proposed structures by which masterplan implementation should be coordinated and actions for short term prioritisation.



7.2 PLACE MARKETING STRATEGY

A robust Place Marketing Strategy will be vital to the city's regeneration and future economic and tourism development and should be an integral part of the strategic planning process. Therefore, it is important that genuine buy-in and ownership of the Place Marketing Strategy amongst all stakeholders is achieved. This will lead to a strategy that will be driven by a clear brand identity for the city, which accurately positions the place in the minds of the widest possible audience. The Place Marketing Strategy must deliver measurable "hard" outputs, in terms of increased footfall and spend, as well as less tangible, but equally important benefits, such as raising civic pride and creating a sustainable competitive advantage and real potential for economic growth.

Recent marketing activity has included the "Think Big" campaign, which originated as part of the City Status Bid and Shopping Centre advertisements and tourism campaigns. While Newry's profile in marketing terms has been relatively high, and there has been a genuine attempt at collaboration between the public and private sector, there is no consistency in the message or direct targeting of particular market segments, which would have a high propensity to visit the city. The masterplan provides the environment and scope to allow the Place Marketing Strategy to develop, with local businesses and the wider community central to each stage of the process, and reach a real understanding and consensus of what is the essence of Newry and how it is differentiated from its competitors.

The masterplanning process has resulted in the preparation of a new confident and ambitious vision statement for Newry city centre, which has been agreed and endorsed by all stakeholders, and presents a shared aspiration of what Newry should become in the future. It clearly articulates the future role of the city, not only within the local Council area, but also within the wider national and international strategic context and is backed up by a number of draft aims and objectives to realise this vision. This provides the platform for the Place Marketing Strategy to emerge as part of the wider implementation programme and will bring the following benefits

- Provides a strategic framework to build a strong, consistent brand identity for Newry to re-define itself as a destination for shoppers, visitors and investors
- Creates a unified, cooperative approach to marketing the city across all public and private sector agencies that increases effectiveness and efficiency of the marketing effort
- Capitalises and builds on the masterplan actions as they come to fruition, such as new investment and environmental improvements and "sell" the new vision for the city to a wider audience.

7.3 ACTION PLAN FOR DELIVERY

		REGENERATION INITIATIVE	PRIORITY	TIMEFRAME	APPROXIMATE COSTS (£)	DELIVERY AGENTS	STAKEHOLDERS
i) CITY WIDE PROPOSALS	i1	City Centre Setting Guidance	H	S	-	NMDC, PS	NIEA
	i2	National Canal Reopening	M	L	-	WI	DSD, NIEA, NITB, NMDC, PS, LA, RS, SIB, SNI, IWAJ, Priv
	i3	City Wide Greenway	M	M	-	NMDC	DSD, IWAJ, NIEA, NITB, NMDC, Priv, PS, PSNI, RA, Trans
	i4	Southern Relief Road	VH	M	-	RS, Priv	DSD, IWAJ, NCCT, NIEA, NMDC, NMEA, Priv, PS, RA, SIB, WHA
	i5	Park and Choose Facilities	H	S	-	RS, Priv	DSD, NMDC, Trans
	i6	Freight Distribution Centre	M	M	-	Priv	DSD, NCCT, NMDC, NMEA, PS, RS
	i7	City Centre Gateway Car Parks	H	(Refer to B2, B4, E2, F1, F3, G1)			
A) WATERFRONT	A1	River Clean Up	H	S	31,000	NMDC	IWAJ, NIEA, Priv, RA, WI
	A2	Waterfront Park	H	S	17,210,000	NMDC, DSD	AC, IWAJ, NCCT, NIEA, NITB, NMEA, Priv, PS, PSNI, RA, RS, Trans, WI
	A3	River Weir	M	S	300,000	RA	DSD, IWAJ, NIEA, NITB, NMDC, PS, RA, BLF
	A4	Canal Navigation	M	M	21,720,000	WI	DSD, IWAJ, NCCT, NITB, NMDC, NMEA, Priv, RA, RS, BLF
	A5	Waterfront Urban Design Strategy	H	S	-	NMDC, PS	DSD, NIEA, Priv
B) SUGAR ISLAND	B1	Newry Town Hall and Setting	H	M	3,593,000	NMDC	DSD, NIEA, NMEA, PS, RA, RS
	B2	Arts Centre and Associated Development	H	M	756,000	NMDC	AC, DSD, MAG, NIEA, NITB, NMEA, PS, RA, RS
	B3	Sands Mill	M	L	13,073,000	Priv	NIEA, NMDC, PS, RS
	B4	Gateway Development	M	S	-	Priv	DSD, NCCT, NITB, NMEA, PS, RS, Trans
	B5	Basin Quay	M	L	8,414,000	NMDC, WI	DSD, IWAJ, NCCT, NITB, NMEA, Priv, RA, RS, SNI
	B6	Courthouse Integration	M	L	927,000	CTS	CTS, NMDC, PS, PSNI, RS, DSD
C) FOUR PARKS	C1	Heather Park	H	S	1,506,000	NMDC	DSD, NIEA, NITB, NMDC, PS, PSNI
	C2	Kilmorey Park	M	S	879,000	NMDC	DSD, Priv, PS, PSNI
	C3	The Rocks	M	M	2,063,000	NMDC	DSD, NIEA, NITB, Priv, PS, PSNI
	C4	Abbey Grounds	H	S	21,371,000	Priv	CCMS, DSD, NIEA, NITB, Priv, PS, PSNI, RS, SNI

Priority:

VH = Very High
H = High
M = Medium

Timeframe:

S = Short (1 - 5 yrs)
M = Medium (5 - 10 yrs)
L = Long (10 - 15 yrs)

Delivery Agents & Stakeholders:

AC Arts Council of Northern Ireland
BLF Big Lottery Fund
CCMS Council for Catholic Maintained Schools
CTS Courts & Tribunals Service Northern Ireland
DSD Department for Social Development
INI Invest Northern Ireland
IWAJ Inland Waterways Association of Ireland
HSCB Health and Social Care Board
LA Loughs Agency
MAG Museums and Galleries Northern Ireland
NCCT Newry Chamber of Commerce and Trade
NIEA Northern Ireland Environment Agency
NIFRS Northern Ireland Fire & Rescue Service
NIHE Northern Ireland Housing Executive
NITB Northern Ireland Tourist Board
NMDC Newry and Mourne District Council

NMEA
Priv
PS
PSNI
RA
RS
SELB
SEHSCT
SIB
SNI
SPCC
SRC
Trans
WHA
WI
WT

Newry and Mourne Enterprise Agency
Private Sector
Planning Service
Police Service Northern Ireland
Rivers Agency
Roads Service
Southern Education and Library Board
Southern Eastern Health & Social Care Trust
Strategic Investment Board
Sport Northern Ireland
Saint Patrick's and Saint Colman's Cathedral
Southern Regional College
Translink
Warrenpoint Harbour Authority
Waterways Ireland
Woodland Trust

REGENERATION INITIATIVE			PRIORITY	TIMEFRAME	APPROXIMATE COSTS (£)	DELIVERY AGENTS	STAKEHOLDERS
D) HILL STREET AND ABBEY WAY	D1	Hill Street Public Realm	VH	S	4,100,000	DSD, NMDC	NCCT, Priv, PS, RS
	D2	Hill Street Development	H	S	6,750,000	Priv	DSD, HSCB, NCCT, NITB, NMDC, PS, RS, SEHSCT
	D3	Newry Variety Market	H	L	2,268,000	NMDC	DSD, NCCT, NITB, NMDC, Priv, PS, RS
	D4	Cathedral Setting	M	M	2,800,000	SPCC	AC, DSD, NIEA, NITB, NMDC, Priv
	D5	William Street Development	M	M	15,750,000	SEHSCT	DSD, HSCB, NCCT, NIHE, NITB, NMDC, Priv
	D6	Abbey Way Streetscape	H	S	500,000	RS	DSD, NCCT, NIEA, NIHE, NMDC, Priv, PS
	D7	North Street Development	H	M	53,270,000	DSD	NCCT, NIEA, NIHE, NMDC, Priv, PS, RS
	D8	Castle Setting	H	M	340,000	NMDC	NMDC, Priv, PS, RS, NIEA, NITB
	D9	Abbey Yard Development	M	M	115,000	Priv	Priv, RS, NIEA
E) MONAGHAN STREET AND UPPER EDWARD STREET	E1	Comprehensive Development Framework	H	S	-	DSD, NMDC	NIEA, Priv, PS, RS, SEHSCT, SRC
	E2	Monaghan Street Public Realm	VH	S	708,000	DSD, NMDC	NIEA, Priv, PS, RS
	E3	Health and Leisure Quarter	H	M	93,624,000	DSD, NMDC	HSCB, MAG, NIFRS, NMDC, NMEA, Priv, PS, RS, SEHSCT, SNI, Trans
	E4	Daisy Hill Hospital Extension	H	L	5,689,000	HSCB, SEHSCT	NMDC, PS
	E5	Daisy Hill Wood	M	M	3,613,000	WT	DSD, NIEA, NITB, NMDC
	E6	College Quarter	M	L	63,261,000	SRC	DSD, HSCB, NIHE, NMDC, Priv, PS, RS, SEHSCT, Trans
	E7	Catherine Street Development	H	L	15,419,000	Priv, NIHE	DSD, NMDC, PS
	E8	Corry Square Children's Theatre	M	M	6,480,000	NMDC	AC, DSD, MAG, NITB, Priv
	E9	Corn Market Retail Development	M	M	28,038,000	Priv	DSD, NCCT, NMDC, NMEA, PS, RS
	E10	Railway Avenue Development	H	M	10,183,000	Priv	DSD, NMDC, Priv, PS, RS
F) BUTTERCRANE AND THE QUAYS	F1	Linkage	M	M	102,000	NMDC	DSD, IWAI, Priv, PS, RA, RS, Trans, WHA
	F2	Short - Medium Term Development	H	M	5,696,000	Priv	AC, DSD, NCCT, NIEA, NMDC, NMEA, PS, RS, Trans
	F3	Long Term Development	M	L	227,648,000	Priv	AC, DSD, NCCT, NIEA, NMDC, NMEA, PS, RS, Trans
G) ALBERT BASIN	G1	Albert Basin Development	H	L	140,784,000	NMDC, Priv	DSD, IWAI, NCCT, NITB, NMDC, NMEA, Priv, RA, RS, SNI, Trans, SIB
PLACE MARKETING STRATEGY	H1	Place Marketing Strategy	H	S	-	NMDC	DSD, NCCT, NMEA, NITB

7.4 DELIVERY STRUCTURES

Newry and Mourne District Council and the Department for Social Development have jointly recognised the need to develop a robust partnership structure, involving the public, private and community sector to drive forward implementation of the Newry City Centre Masterplan and seamlessly move from the planning to the delivery phase. The emergence of this masterplan provides a unique opportunity to bring together the key stakeholders from the public, private and community sectors to co-ordinate the regeneration and marketing of the city and drive forward the identified actions.

There is already strong evidence of good practice in public/private sector partnership building over a number of years. Relationships already exist between the key public government departments and agencies, such as DOE Planning Service, DRD Roads Service, NIEA etc, while the private sector has been encouraged to play an active role in the strategic planning process to date. It is vital that the stakeholder enthusiasm and the momentum for change that has been so evident in the preparation of this masterplan are not lost. There is also a keen awareness of the need to demonstrate a commitment to delivery of the masterplan through a number of “quick wins” bringing benefits to the city centre in the short term. A key indication of the Council’s commitment to this approach is its willingness to provide dedicated office space to house this new partnership structure, in a recently refurbished Council building, located right in the heart of the city.

Robust delivery and funding mechanisms have been an overarching consideration throughout the masterplanning process. The Consultancy team, which included Place Marketing experts, has worked closely with the client team to adopt a pragmatic, commercially led approach to the regeneration and marketing of the city.

It will now be necessary for the following steps to be taken:

- Outline the evolving context and timescales of regeneration and community development policy in Northern Ireland, as it will impact on this project and the spectrum of regeneration funding and delivery structures from informal partnership arrangements, through to development companies limited by guarantee, charitable status or community interest companies, voluntary (v-BID), formal BID companies etc, the benefits/disadvantages of each and their suitability to the Newry context.
- Define the key role, remit and most importantly, relationships between key public, private and community stakeholders in the area ie Council, Chamber, Greater Newry Vision, tourism bodies etc
- Identify the key skills, experience and influence set required to deliver the vision, objectives and actions set out in the draft masterplan and identify gaps

The Masterplan Advisory Group, which has guided the preparation of the masterplan, will form a sound basis for the development of a delivery partnership structure. The following organisations are represented:

- NMDC Elected Representatives
- NMDC Officers
- Newry and Mourne Enterprise Agency
- Newry Chamber of Commerce and Trade
- Newry City Centre Management
- Greater Newry Vision Partnership
- DOE Planning Service
- DRD Roads Service Traffic Section
- Northern Ireland Tourist Board (NITB)
- Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA)
- DSD, Regional Development Office

In light of the agreed vision and range of emerging actions identified in the masterplan, it is recognised that the other organisations also have a valuable contribution to make.

These may include:

- Southern Regional College
- Southern Health & Social Care Trust
- NI Housing Executive
- Translink
- Strategic Investment Board
- Invest NI
- Community Safety Partnership

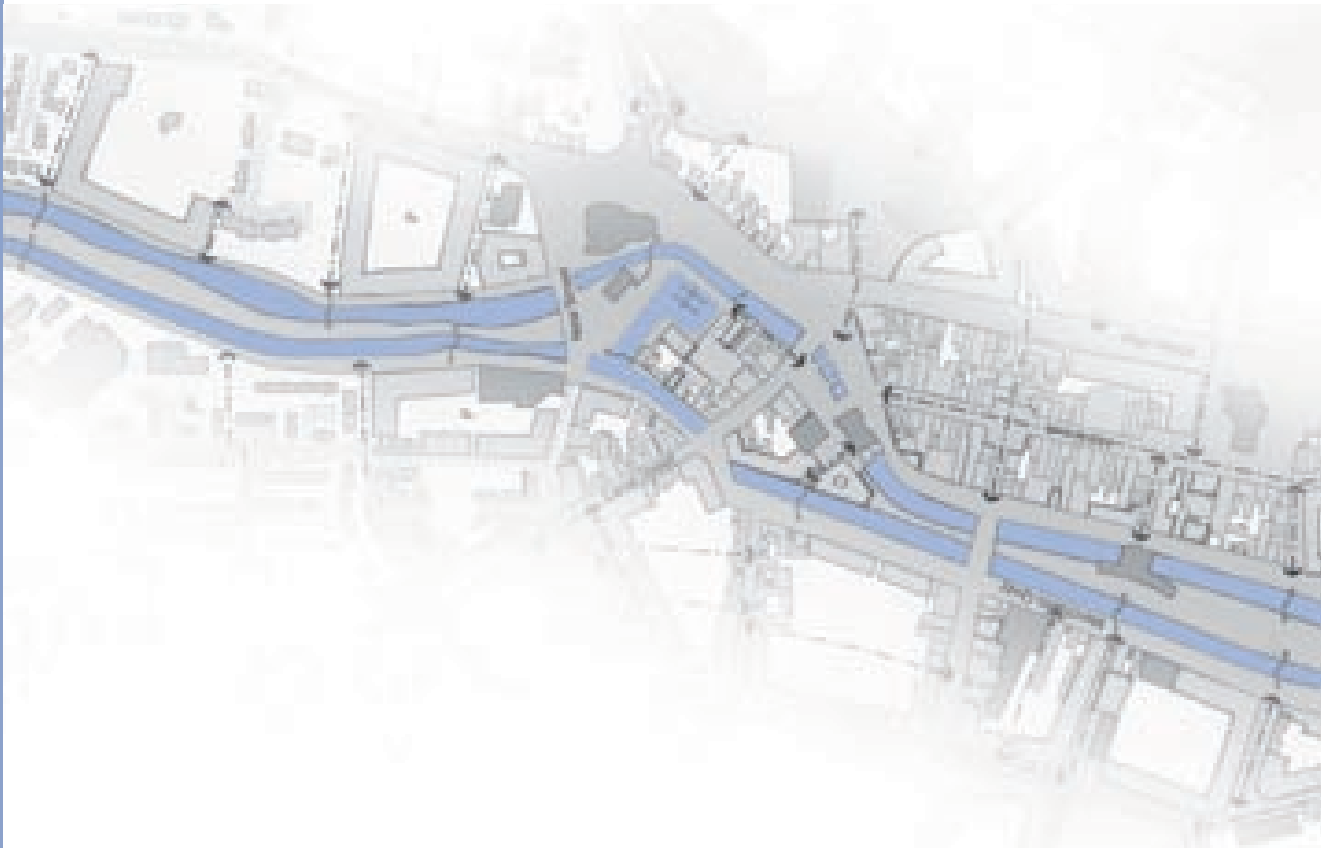
The new partnership structure will prioritise and co-ordinate strategic planning and operational delivery of the masterplan. They will champion the plan, be an advocate for it, lobby for the provision of funding, act as a catalyst for private sector investment and ensure that is fully integrated into the current political, legislative and funding environment within which it exists. This high profile partnership will be facilitated by Newry and Mourne District Council to ensure that there is a joined up strategic and operational perspective, a robust, transparent governance and financial framework, a clearly defined remit, scope of delivery and accountability.

The Board will be supported by a number of Project Teams which will focus on the core aims of the masterplan, such as International City, Welcoming City, Healthy City and Competitive City. Their structure and membership will be tailored to suit the individual themes, using appropriately qualified and skilled professionals. Other project specific teams may also be formed to deliver individual projects identified in the Action Plan for Delivery.

7.5 SHORT TERM ACTIONS

REGENERATION INITIATIVE		PRIORITY	TIMEFRAME
i1	City Centre Setting Guidance	H	S
i4	Southern Relief Road	VH	M
i5	Park and Choose Facilities	H	S
i7	City Centre Gateway Car Parks	H	M
A1	River Clean Up	H	S
A2	Waterfront Park	H	S
A5	Waterfront Urban Design Strategy	H	S
B1	Newry Town Hall and Setting	H	M
B2	Arts Centre and Associated Development	H	M

REGENERATION INITIATIVE		PRIORITY	TIMEFRAME
C1	Heather Park	H	S
C4	Abbey Grounds	H	S
D1	Hill Street Public Realm	VH	S
D2	Hill Street Development	H	S
D6	Abbey Way Streetscape	H	S
D7	North Street Development	H	M
D8	Castle Setting	H	M
E1	Comprehensive Development Framework	H	S
E2	Monaghan Street Public Realm	VH	S
H1	Place Marketing Strategy	H	S



7.6 THE WAY FORWARD

Iubhar Cinn Tragha. Newry began life through the simple act of one man, when Saint Patrick planted a yew tree on the head of the river strand. Around this tree grew a monastery and around the monastery a town, becoming the busy and prosperous place we now see before us. Since its formation, Newry has undergone major transformations at the hands of many, from the creation of a medieval town, building of the island's first ever summit canal, construction of Abbey Way to 2001 and the granting of city status.

Now in 2011, Newry has the opportunity to embark on the next of these transformations. Like the growth of a yew tree, this process will be gradual, requiring the right conditions, care and attention. Yet a magnificent opportunity exists to realise a confident, prosperous and sustainable future for the city and its people.



